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TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Henry G. Spaulding

THE

TEACHINGS OF JESUS.

BY

HENRY G. SPAULDING.

TWELFTH EDITION.

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UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY,
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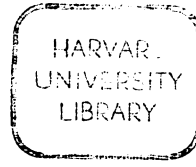

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PREFACE.

THESE Lessons have been prepared for use in Sunday-schools where the "one-topic" method is followed; but they will be found equally useful as a Class-Manual for pupils above Infant Classes. The age of ten or eleven may be taken as the dividing line with reference to the two sets of Questions, — those for younger and those for older pupils.

The plan of the Lessons is to furnish answers to the three questions that we naturally ask concerning any "Scripture," namely, 1. What does it say? 2. What does it mean? 3. What does it teach? The first question is answered in the *Lesson-passage*, the central truth of which is given in the *Golden Text*. The *Meaning* of the passage is explained in a series of Notes; and the *Teaching* unfolded by means of exposition, illustration, and application. The *Golden Sayings* embody in brief sentences or verses the essential truths of the Teaching. As these Lessons are intended to be ethical and religious rather than critical, many questions in biblical criticism that some teachers might profitably discuss with the older classes are not touched upon here. Such questions have their proper place in Bible teaching; but the introduction of inquiries of a purely critical nature in lessons that have a moral or spiritual aim would tend, with the majority of our Sunday-school scholars, to confuse the mind or divert the thoughts from topics of more vital interest.

Both the subject-matter and the method of these Lessons have been determined by the requirements of our Sunday-schools. The Unitarian Sunday-School Society aims to meet by its publications a great variety of needs, and so offers these One-Topic Lessons to supplement the series of Manuals which it has recently issued. The subject of the Lessons is not only central in any scheme of Bible-study, but is also the topic on which Manuals or Lessons are constantly

demanded by the schools. In our Sunday-school paper, EVERY OTHER SUNDAY, additional lesson-helps will be given. The paper will also contain a series of *Golden-Text* stories, which can be read to the younger pupils by their teachers.

In the present series of Lessons the Teachings of Jesus are presented under the three heads of the duties that men owe: (1) To themselves; (2) To others; and (3) To God. Much that he taught under these three heads, and many truths which cannot be classified as "duties," are not treated here.

The best results in teaching the Lessons will be reached by those who will use them as helps to inquiry and personal thinking, and will supplement the notes and the expositions with facts and illustrations supplied from the teacher's own studies and reflections. To the scholars it is hoped that the explanations, interpretations, and questions may be helpful in awakening thought and rousing inquiry. May the Lessons also contribute to a practical knowledge of those moral and religious truths which "shine aloft like stars" in the teachings of Jesus.

H. G. S.

AUGUST, 1885.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS.

Let each pupil carry a copy of the New Testament into the class. Always read the Lesson-passage in the Revised Version, and compare the translation with that of the Common Version. The NOTES referred to in the Questions are those which are given in the MEANING. The sign § in the Questions refers to a numbered paragraph in the TEACHING. The POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY may suggest topics to converse upon at the close of the recitation, and may also be assigned to the older pupils for brief written reports. ALL the pupils should read over carefully both the Lesson-passage and the MEANING. The younger pupils need not read the TEACHING, except as it is referred to in the QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGER PUPILS. A list of BOOKS OF REFERENCE will be found in the Appendix.

SPECIAL NOTE TO TEACHERS.

The author earnestly requests the teacher not to use the Questions in the recitation. They are designed simply to call the attention of the student to those points in the Lesson which he should particularly examine. For the class recitation, the teacher should frame his own questions, and adapt them to the requirements of the pupils before him, that he may stimulate their interest and awaken further inquiry. Lesson helps are helpful when they are used as "excitants" to thought, not when they are taken up as intellectual crutches to lean upon.

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THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS.

LESSON I.

SON AND BROTHER.

Luke xv. 11–32.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.— Luke xv. 31.

THE MEANING.

INTRODUCTORY. The story of the Prodigal Son belongs to that class of parables that teach the divine goodness and grace as the law of Christian living. Its central doctrine is the lofty truth that every man, even the meanest of mankind, is a son of God, and, as such, is not only dear to the Father, but should be treated as a brother by every other one of God's children.

Verse 11. "*Two sons.*" The younger son stands in general for every man who, having done wrong, truly repents; while the elder son represents those who in outward conduct are good, but in their hearts are proud and envious, and so have no brotherly love towards others. In the times of Jesus the "publicans" were like the younger son, the "Pharisees" like the elder.

Verse 12. "*The portion of thy substance that falleth to me.*" Among the Jews, the younger son would inherit — that is, receive after his father's death — one third of his property, the other two thirds going to the first-born. No law compelled the father to divide his property while he was living; but this father, for what he thinks are good reasons, decides to grant his son's request.

Verse 15. "*To feed swine.*" In the eyes of a Jew, nothing could be more degrading than to be a swine-herd. It teaches us how low a man falls who follows a course of wrong-doing.

Verse 16. "*The husks that the swine did eat.*" These "husks" were the pods of the carob-tree. They are in shape like a bean-pod, have a sweetish taste, and though used chiefly as food for swine, are sometimes eaten by very poor people. The meaning of this verse is, that though no man gave him even this poor sort of food, he did eat it, but it failed to satisfy his hunger. So when sin brings the soul to want, the food it offers is utterly unfit to satisfy our spiritual hunger.

Verse 19. "*Make me as one of thy hired servants.*" With his willingness to be treated as if he were one of his father's laborers, the prodigal yet feels that in that father's house he will really be a son again. It is interesting to note that when he does confess to his father he says nothing about being a servant. How could he? His father restored him at once to his full sonship; and in filial obedience as a son, and not in servile labor, he will prove the sincerity of his repentance.

Verse 22. The "*best robe*" is given him as a mark of distinction; the "*ring*" and the "*shoes*" as badges of a *free* man.

Verse 24. "*Was dead,*" etc. As this remark was addressed to the servants, it can only mean *was as good as dead;* that is, the prodigal had left his home as absolutely as if he had died. That the servants so understood it is evident from ver. 27, where one of them says to the elder brother that the father had killed the fatted calf because he had received back his son "safe and sound."

Verse 30. "*This thy son.*" More literally, this son of thine; an expression of contempt, implying that though the prodigal might be recognized by the father as his son, *he* was not going to call him brother.

THE TEACHING.

1. IN these lessons we shall take up in their order those teachings of Jesus which refer to the duties (1) that we owe to others, (2) that we owe to ourselves, and (3) that we owe to God. The key-note to all the teachings of Jesus is his idea of man as SON *and* BROTHER. Every man, he taught, is a son of God, and is therefore a brother to every other son of the One Heavenly Father. The great aim and purpose of his life was to make this sonship of man to God a reality on earth. If this could be brought about, then the kingdom of the Father would indeed come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

2. Let us see, now, how Jesus sets forth this double relation of the Son and the Brother. It is most clearly and beautifully taught in the parable of the Prodigal Son, which is the subject of the present lesson. Here we are made to see that the "kingdom of God" is a kingdom in which the King is a father, and all the subjects are brethren. The law which everywhere prevails in this kingdom is the law that unites and governs a true family. This law is the *Law of Love.* All the duties which men owe to their fellow-men are only different applications of this one law. As loyal subjects of God's kingdom, "sons of one family," men are bound to be just, merciful, forgiving, patient, kind, and helpful to their fellow-men.

3. The parable of the lost son is a plain, homely story of family life. Three characters appear in it, — the son, the father, the brother. We are told first of the sin and folly of the son, but we are at the same time made to feel a tender pity for the poor wanderer. "His career is shown us in four successive scenes. In the first we see his self-will, in the second his folly, in the third his misery, and in the fourth his repentance." His self-will appears in his demanding his "portion of goods," in order that he may go his own way and no longer be a loving and helpful son in his father's house. His folly is depicted in very few words. Enough is told us to show that loss of the restraints of home is soon followed by the loss of self-control and even of self-respect. That such folly should end in wretchedness and want was only the natural course of things. The downward path may be lined with flowers, but it leads to misery. The whole description shows the intimate connection between the sin of the prodigal and its punishment. "He who would not, as a son, be treated liberally by his father is compelled to be the bondslave of a foreign master; he who would not abide in his father's royal palace is sent to the fields among hinds; he who would not dwell among brethren and princes is obliged to be the servant and companion of brutes; he who would not eat at his father's bountiful table asks in his hunger for the husks of the swine." Then comes the last scene of the swiftly acted play. The wanderer thinks of the home from which he has strayed, and resolves to turn back. At first it is only a feeling of hunger that brings him to his senses and suggests the comforts which he might have been enjoying. But he soon becomes truly repentant, and is ready to say from his sorrowing heart: "Father, I have sinned."

4. To understand the real nature of the prodigal's sin, we must look ahead a little way in the story. The poor starving wanderer is moved to rise and go to his father because he has at last *come to himself.* It was from himself, that is, from his true and better self, that he had at first gone away. "Are there not, perhaps," asks Dr. Clarke, in the "Legend of Thomas Didymus," "two men in us who can go from each other and then return again? The true self in us, the Master meant to teach, is the good self; the knowledge of what is true; the love of what is right. This is the deepest self in all men. The outer self is the man's upper thought and wilful action." St. Paul teaches the same idea when he says: "I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin." He finds one law in the inward man and another law in the outer man, and these are warring with one another. In this war between our two selves we all have to take part, and we are like the prodigal in the story whenever we go

away from our good selves and yield to the passions and desires of our lower selves. On the other hand, when we turn from our sins and come back to our true selves, we shall return, as the prodigal did, to our Father. Or we may put this the other way, and say: When we are drawn to God, when His Spirit moves us, we are drawn not to a far-off being who is outside of ourselves, but to the God who speaks to us within our hearts and our consciences, whose voice we hear in the call of our own higher nature. So intimate and so sacred, Jesus teaches us, is our sonship to the Heavenly Father.

5. The second of the three characters in the story is the father of the prodigal. How loving and how lovable he is made to appear! Can we not see it all, as in a picture? This father has never ceased looking for the return of his poor "lost" boy. One day, as he stands in the door of his house, he sees "afar off" a lone wanderer. Something in the form and movement of the traveller brings up in the father's mind the never-forgotten image of the loved one. Instantly the full tide of his compassion flows forth and sweeps every other feeling before it. He runs and falls on the neck of his son, and again and again, with loving rapture, kisses him! And such an One as this is that Heavenly Father whose sons we are!

6. We may, perhaps, wish that the story had gone no further, and that nothing had been added to detract from the perfect beauty of the picture of the penitent prodigal. But a true painting of the facts of life required the added figure of the elder brother. He stands before us, in these closing verses of the parable, drawn by a master hand. See him returning home after a day of honest toil on his father's estate. Hear him ask the servants what mean the unusual sounds of music and dancing that greet his ears. Behold him, too, as in tones of virtuous indignation he says to his father: "Lo! these many years do I serve thee, and I never transgressed a commandment of thine; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." Hear him yet further, as he contemptuously alludes to the high honor paid to a disobedient and worthless fellow who deserved a flogging rather than a feast!

7. Do any of us sympathize with this elder brother, and think that he had good reasons for complaining? We can do this only by forgetting what it is to be a Son and a Brother. Had not this man enjoyed the great blessing of being with his father, partaking of every joy of the home, and daily loaded with its benefits? Was it acting the part of a true son to refuse to enter into the happiness which the father felt at the restoration of his boy who had been "lost"? How, indeed, could he better show a filial spirit than by owning this penitent prodigal, and by making merry with the rest at the reconciliation feast? More than this. That prodigal is his brother. He has forsaken the evil ways in which he had strayed. He has come home. It is the brother's duty, no less than the father's, to give him a loving welcome, to forgive the past and help to make a better future.

8. This lesson of the last part of the parable may, after all, be the very one which most of us need to learn. Few of us have probably ever sinned as grievously as did the prodigal, and have not, therefore, needed the same forgiveness. But how often we have been unloving and unbrotherly toward our frail and erring fellow-men! How envious we have been whenever some unexpected blessing fell to their lot! How harshly and in what a censorious spirit we have condemned them for sins that we ourselves have never been tempted to commit! How much more we must grow into our Father's image before we can discharge aright the simplest duties of mercy and kindness to those who are our brethren!

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

The best name by which we can think of God is Father. It is a loving, deep, sweet, heart-touching name. — MARTIN LUTHER.

The image of God is the pattern of your life, the standard of your duty. — PHILLIPS BROOKS.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

WHITTIER.

Day and night, going out and coming in, say to yourselves, "I am with God, my Father, and God, my Father, is with me." — CHARLES KINGSLEY.

The universe is but one great city, full of beloved ones, by nature endeared to each other. — EPICTETUS.

Infinite is the help man can yield to man. — CARLYLE.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. — ROMANS xii. 10.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Relate the first part of the parable. Verses 11–16.
2. What kind of people are like this younger son? Note on ver. 11.
3. How much was a younger son's "*portion*" among the Jews? Note on ver. 12.
4. How did this son get his portion?
5. What did the Jews think of people who had to "*feed swine*"? Note on ver. 15.
6. Explain ver. 16. Note.
7. Relate the second part of the parable. Verses 17–24.
8. What words of ver. 19 did the prodigal omit to say when he came to his father? See ver. 21.
9. Why did he not say them? Note on ver. 19.
10. What did the "robe," the "ring," and the "shoes" signify? Note on ver. 22.
11. What are we to understand by the words, "was dead and is alive again"? Note on ver. 24.
12. Relate the third part of the parable. Verses 25–32.
13. In what kind of a tone did the elder brother say, "This son of thine"? Note on ver. 30.
14. What kind of people are like this elder brother? Note on ver. 11.
15. What do you think of his conduct? § 7.
16. What lesson is taught us in this last part of the parable? § 8.
17. What is the teaching of the first part of the parable? § 3.
18. How are we to understand the words, "he came to himself," in ver. 17? § 4.
19. What may we learn from this parable about the "kingdom of God" and the *law* of that kingdom? § 2.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What is the key-note to *all* the teachings of Jesus? § 1.
2. What does the parable of the Prodigal Son teach us about the "kingdom of God" and the *law* of that kingdom? § 2.
3. Give, in your own words, the *substance* of this parable.
4. To which *class* of the parables of Jesus does this story belong, and what is its central teaching? Introductory note.
5. When in general and what two classes of men in particular are typified by the "two sons"? Note on ver. 11.
6. Explain ver. 12. Note.
7. Explain ver. 16. Note.
8. In conparing ver. 19 with 21, what omission do you note, and what does this omission signify? Note on ver. 19.
9. Explain the phrase "*was dead*," etc., in ver. 24. Note.
10. In ver. 30, how does the elder brother show his contempt for the prodigal?
11. What are the *four scenes* which are shown us in the prodigal's career? § 3.
12. What first prompted him to rise and go to his father? § 3.
13. What are the *two selves* referred to in § 4?
14. How does St. Paul speak of the double self in man? § 4.
15. How is a penitent's return to God related to his coming back to his true self? § 4.
16. What is the character of the *father* of the prodigal as shown in verses 20–24? § 5.
17. How is the elder brother made to appear in verses 25–30? § 6.
18. On what grounds is his conduct to be blamed? § 7.
19. How may we apply to ourselves the lesson of this closing portion of the parable? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

(*One or more of these may be assigned to the older pupils for a brief written report.*)

1. Show how the "publicans" were like the prodigal son. 2. Show how the "Pharisees" were like the elder brother. 3. Use of the word "Father" in the Old Testament. 4. The truth of God's Fatherhood as a distinctive Christian teaching.

LESSON II.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Luke x. 25–37.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.—Luke x. 27.

THE MEANING.

Verse 25. "*A certain lawyer*,"—that is, a Rabbi or teacher of the Jewish religion. As Jesus was also a teacher we have here a meeting beween two Rabbis or Masters. "*Tempted him*,"—that is, tested him by his question, tried to find out just what Jesus would say about this matter. "*What shall I do*," etc. The "lawyer's" question meant: What shall one do to be a saint? He asked how to *get* "eternal life," as people sometimes speak of "getting religion." He did not know that eternal life is not a reward of merit, but is the possession of those who live under the law of love. "He who loveth is born of God," and has the "eternal life" of God abiding in him.

Verse 27. These two "laws" are given in Deut. vi. 5 and Lev. xix. 18.

Verse 29. "*Wishing to justify himself*,"—that is, he wished to show that the matter was not quite so easily settled as the answer of Jesus seemed to imply. He wanted to know more of the mind of this Teacher of Nazareth concerning the great question of love to one's neighbor.

Verse 30. "*Went down*." The journey was literally down hill; but whoever went in any direction from Jerusalem, the capital city, was said to go *down*. "*Jericho*." One of the oldest cities of Palestine, a "city of palms," lying in a fertile plain and once very rich. Read about it in any Bible dictionary. See also Joshua iii. 14–16, Matt. xx. 29, and Mark x. 46. It was twenty-one miles from Jerusalem. "*Fell among robbers*." The ancient name of this dreary road among the Judæan hills, the "*Path of blood*," shows how dangerous it had always been considered.

Verses 31, 32. "*Priest . . . Levite*." These men were coming down from the "Holy City," where they had been engaged in their religious duties at the Temple, offering the sacrifices, burning the incense, etc. The "Levites" were the assistants of the "Priests."

Verse 33. "*Samaritan*." Though the Samaritans lived in the very midst of the Jewsh people, they hated and ill-treated the Jews; and, in their turn, the Jews hated them and would have no dealings with them. (John iv. 9.) In their professed religious belief the Samaritans were farther from the truth than the Priests and Levites. But goodness of heart is often met with where the creed or belief of the head is wrong. (Read Matt. vii. 21.)

Verse 34. "*Oil and wine*." In the East a common dressing for wounds was made of wine and oil, and travellers usually carried these articles for this purpose.

Verse 35. "*Two pence*,"—that is two *denarii*, equal to thirty-four cents, a sum that was then two days' wages of a laborer.

Verse 36. "*Was neighbor*,"—that is, showed himself a neighbor, became a neighbor by doing a neighborly deed. The "lawyer" asked (ver. 29), "Who is neighbor to *me?*" Jesus answers his question and more; for he shows him to whom *he is a neighbor*. The parable teaches two great lessons. First, it shows us what it is to be a neighbor,—namely, to help promptly and thoroughly any one whom we find in need. Secondly, it answers the question *Who* is the neighbor?—namely, any one whom we can help, whoever he may be.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE story is told of the famous Scotch minister, Samuel Rutherford, that once when he was catechising his children and servants, a stranger knocked at the door of the manse and begged shelter for the night. The minister received him kindly, and asked him to take part in their religious exercises. In the course of the lesson the question came to the stranger, "How many commandments are there?" He answered, "Eleven." "Eleven?" exclaimed the good parson. "I am surprised that a person of your age and appearance should not know better. What do you mean?" The stranger answered: "A *new* commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." (John xiii. 34.)

2. Why did Jesus call this a new commandment? He refers the "lawyer who tempted him" to the old law that said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and he added: "This do and thou shalt live," — that is, shalt inherit "eternal life." The "new commandment" is that we are to love one another as members of one divine family. In such a family love is the rule for all to follow, — a love that is to be shown toward *every* "neighbor," — every one with whom we are brought into contact, "every one who is thrown across our path by the changes and chances of life." The newness of the commandment of Jesus is seen first in the supreme and controlling place which it gives to the force of human affections, "the enthusiasm for the good of others;" and secondly, in the illustration which the giver of the rule has furnished of its deep meaning and wide application. Jesus was himself the Good Samaritan before he told the Good Samaritan's story.

3. Look, now, at some of the details of the parable. The story is admirably constructed, like a perfect picture painted by a skilful artist. "The place, the persons, and the moral all fit into each other." The place is a rugged pass between Jerusalem and Jericho. Over the narrow, rocky road priests would often journey, going from the "holy city" to Jericho, a "city of priests." Over the same rough road Samaritans would also often go, travelling to Jerusalem or returning thence on errands of business. Two such priests and one such Samaritan are brought before us in the parable. The fourth character in the drama is an unknown man whom the thieves that frequent this "Bloody Way" have robbed of purse and clothes; and wounding him as he struggles to defend himself, have heartlessly left him there to die. Observe, next, how true to life is the little word-picture of the three men who chanced to find the wounded traveller. Of one of them, a priest of the religion of Jehovah, the record simply is: "He came, he saw, and he passed by on the other side." Of the second, a Levite, one of those priests of the Temple to whom ministries of mercy specially belonged, it could only be said, "He came, he saw, he paused to look; and then, like the other, he passed the sufferer by."

4. Does such conduct seem unnatural, inhuman? It would indeed to-day in any Christian land be counted so should any one in selfish cruelty neglect to succor the physically distressed, or fail to relieve those who are suffering from bodily pain. Herein is shown the immense advance which charity has made since Christendom began to be. But stop a moment. Are there none to-day "who pass by need without giving pity time to rise in the bosom"? Is there nothing to justify the poet's sad refrain —

> "Alas! for the rarity
> Of Christian charity
> Under the sun"?

Let the wounded man in that Syrian mountain-pass stand for all sorts and conditions of human want, and are there not multitudes who still see, perhaps even pause to look, and yet pass by on the other side? There are *wounds of the heart, griefs of the soul*, of which we have ample knowledge, and yet fail to pour upon them the oil and wine of our helpful sympathy and our healing love. We come across our wounded "neighbors," not in the far-off dangerous places of human life, but in our common daily walks. We jostle them on the crowded

thoroughfare. They dwell on our street; they go to our church; sometimes they sit at table with us beneath the same home-roof. Yet how often we pass them by! How many things we leave undone, the doing of which would have comforted sad souls and bound up bleeding hearts! When we refrain from speaking the soothing or the healing word, when we are so wrapped up in self that we neglect to notice the unhappiness we might remove, when our pride or our indolence keeps us from doing any act of kindness that is in our power to do, we are like the priest and the Levite, — as heartless, as unchristlike, as they.

5. See, now, in the action of the Good Samaritan, the man who was merciful to him that fell among the thieves, an example of "the genius of true love." No care for self comes between his pity and the sufferer's need. He is not thinking, as we may imagine the priest and Levite to have thought: "How very common these robberies are getting to be! One ought of course to help, yet we cannot be expected to look after every unfortunate traveller whom we chance to come upon. We need to be very careful, or these bold robbers will make us suffer." This Samaritan trader has too much real goodness of heart to stop to find excuses for not doing this nearest duty. So he sets about the task of mercy "with promptitude, thoroughness, self-denial, and unwearying patience; and also with *tact*, doing all things in their proper order and in the best and most considerate way, — first, stanching the wounds with wine and oil, then carrying the patient to an inn where he can stay till he recovers, and making himself answerable for all charges incurred during convalescence." We are thus taught that true brotherly love is something deeper than sentimental feeling, something stronger than a mere impulse of kindness. The Samaritan acts like one who is in the habit of doing deeds of mercy. Without fuss or parade, in a quiet, business-like way, he gives effective relief. His is

"... the thoughtful love
Through constant watching wise."

He treats this "neighbor" like a brother, and into his dealings with a suffering Jew, a man of another faith, one of a proud people who hated *him*, carries something of the loving thoughtfulness that marks the mutual service of members of the same family.

6. This beautiful teaching of the parable which Jesus told the Jewish lawyer gains a hundredfold when we read it in the light of his own example. See in how many ways this loving thoughtfulness and this thoughtful love are illustrated in the life of this Teacher, whose merciful kindnesses gave him the title of the *Physician of souls*. The only spiritual wounds he ever cauterizes with the invective of a righteous indignation are those of self-righteousness and Pharisaic pride,— wounds that a milder treatment never heals. Upon all other wounds of human souls he pours the wine and oil of sympathy and a loving tact. In Simon's house he accepts the gift of precious ointment which a poor, sinful, yet penitent woman pours upon his feet, and gently sends her away with the kind words: "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace;" while with an apt illustration from an improvised parable he holds before his astonished host a picture of Pharisaic hardness, and bidding him look first on this picture and then on that, pours upon his wound truth's healing wine. Again, to the despised Zaccheus he gives the approving smile and the gracious word that shows him that *he* has faith in him however the world may judge, and thus calls forth from beneath this injured character the healthy growth of the publican's better nature. And when in the peaceful house at Bethany Mary is blamed by her more active sister because she does less than her share of the work of the house, Jesus, in a tone of tenderness which can excite no jealousy, gives to Mary her meed of praise, while with equal tenderness he reproves the over-anxious spirit which Martha has displayed.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Love is the fulfilling of the law. — ROM. xiii. 10.

Love is the piety of the affections. — THEODORE PARKER.

Love took up the harp of Life and smote on
all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed
in music out of sight. TENNYSON.

Beloved, let us love one another. — 1 JOHN iv. 7.

I am a man; I count nothing human foreign to me. — TERENCE.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Repeat the *Golden Text.*
2. In what Gospel are these words found?
3. Who says them?
4. How did he come to say them?
5. What question had been asked of him just before? Ver. 25.
6. In what other part of the Bible are the words of the *Golden Text?* Note on ver. 27.
7. Tell something of this meeting between Jesus and the "lawyer." Note on ver. 25.
8. What did Jesus say in ver. 28?
9. What did the lawyer do next? Ver. 29, and note.
10. Where was Jerusalem?
11. How far off was Jericho from Jerusalem?
12. Why is it said that the man "went *down* to Jericho"? Note on ver. 30.
13. Tell something about Jericho, and the road over which this traveller went. Same note.
14. What happened to the traveller?
15. Who were the two men that first came along where the traveller lay?
16. Tell something about them and what they did. Verses 31, 32, note and § 3.
17. Who was the third man that came along? Ver. 33.
18. Tell something about him and tell what he did. Verses 33–35, and note on ver. 33.
19. Why did he pour in "oil and wine"? Note on ver. 34.
20. How much were "two pence"? Note on ver. 35.
21. Did Jesus answer by this story the exact question which the lawyer put to him in ver. 29? Note on ver. 36.
22. What two great lessons does the parable teach? Same note.
23. Tell the story given in § 1.
24. In what way do you think the commandment to "love one another" was *new?*
25. Read § 6 and then tell one of the events in which Jesus is shown to have been like the "Good Samaritan."
26. How can *you* "do likewise"? Read § 4.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Repeat the words of Jesus given in John xiii. 34.
2. Tell the story in § 1.
3. Show how the commandment to "love one another" is *new.* § 2.
4. Tell the parable of the Good Samaritan as far as ver. 33.
5. Describe the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, its length, character, etc. See notes.
6. Tell something about Jericho. Notes.
7. How did it happen that the priest and the Levite were journeying that way?
8. How do you think their conduct in passing by the wounded traveller would have been regarded by their countrymen generally?
9. What excuses might they themselves have given for it? § 5.
10. Tell the rest of the parable. Verses 33–37.
11. Describe the position of Samaria.
12. Tell something about the Samaritans and their relations with the Jews.
13. How does the merciful act of this "Good Samaritan" illustrate the "genius of true love"? § 5.
14. In Matthew, chapter 23, how does Jesus "cauterize the spiritual wounds" of self-righteousness and Pharisaism?
15. How does he treat other spiritual wounds in Simon's house, — in the meeting with Zaccheus, — at the home in Bethany? § 6.
16. Is the poet's complaint, "Alas! for the rarity of Christian charity under the sun," justified by the facts of our modern life? § 4.
17. *When* do we act in the spirit of the priest and Levite? § 4.
18. What sort of a meeting was it at which this parable was told? Note on ver. 25.
19. Describe the character of the "lawyer" and the purpose of his questions.
20. Show the *indirect* way in which Jesus replied to the lawyer's second question.
21. What are the two great lessons that this parable makes clear? Note on 36.
22. Show how our "sins of omission" reveal an unbrotherly spirit.
23. How may *we*, to-day, obey the command, "go and *do likewise*"?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Samaria and the Samaritans in the time of Christ. 2. The "priest" as he appears in the Old Testament and in the New. 3. Charity among the ancient Jews. 4. Limits of the exercise of love towards our "neighbor."

LESSON III.

THE GOLDEN RULE OF JUSTICE.

Matt. vii. 7–12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.—Matt. vii. 12.

THE MEANING.

Verses 7, 8. "*Ask*," etc. This passage, from verse 7 to verse 12, seems not to be connected either with what goes before or with what follows it, yet there is a real connection. Jesus has been telling men what their duties to others are. But in these verses he bids them *look up* that they may get strength to lift others up. The work is hard, but by prayer for the things that are "good," wisdom and courage will be gained. "*Seek . . . knock*"—each of the three words that mean to pray is stronger than the one before it. We are, therefore, to be earnest and persevering in our prayers. We shall receive and find, and it shall be opened unto us, provided that we ask in faith and with a good conscience for the things that are right and that are "as God wills." All these conditions are implied in true prayer, and it is to such prayer that Jesus refers.

Verses 9, 10. A "*cake*" or "*roll*" of bread *looks* as much like a stone as a fish looks like a snake. Fish and bread were the staple articles of food with the peasants of Galilee.

Verse 11. "*Being evil*," that is, in comparison with God. The fact that men do wrong is here recognized; but coupled with this is the emphatic statement that there is in man's nature an element of pure affection which will not suffer him to practise the gross deception that is here mentioned. Men are too good, by nature, Jesus says, to do such a mean thing; and their fatherhood, dimmed though it is by human imperfection, is yet "a fit parable of the Fatherhood of God."

Verse 12. This verse, which contains the *Golden Rule*, begins with a "*therefore*." Jesus has just taught these Galilean fisher-folk that God is infinitely more loving than any one of them, though no one of them, however conscious of evil he might be, would be so heartless as to give his child a stone for bread or a serpent for a fish. *Therefore*, he now adds, because you are the favored children of such a Father you ought to do for your brethren whatsoever things you would that they should do for you.

"*The Law and the Prophets*." This means not merely the Mosaic law in its literal commands, but that old law as its spirit was developed and applied by the Hebrew prophets. The great central teaching of the higher prophets was that right conduct is vastly more important than formal worship. The "testimonies" of righteousness they declared to be "the very joy of the heart," the inspiration of the life. In the light of their grand sayings, love to one's neighbor begins to take on the form of active goodness. It is "mercy and not sacrifice," helpfulness and not ceremonial.

THE TEACHING.

1. THIS Golden Rule of Jesus has well been described as "the Christian form of the ethical law, Be just." But in what sense, it will be asked, is this called a Christian rule, since its substance is found in the sayings of other teachers besides Jesus? To answer this question, let us look at some of these sayings. One of them comes to us from the *Talmud* (the book that contains the Hebrew laws, traditions, and explanations), in a beautiful story that is told about Rabbi Hillel. "A certain heathen, who probably wished to throw ridicule upon the numerous religious institutions and practices of the Jews, had gone to Shammai, the head of the opposite school to Hillel's, and told him that he wished to become a Jew, and desired to receive instruction from him, but only on condition that the whole religious doctrine of the Jews should be imparted to him while he could stand upon one leg! Shammai chased him from his door indignantly. The heathen was well enough pleased by this result, and went on to Hillel, expecting to make fun of him in the same way. 'Good, my son!' answered the Rabbi gently, 'make ready and attend: What is hateful to thee do not to another. This is the whole law; all else is only its explanation.'"

2. This famous saying of the Jewish Rabbi differs from the teaching of Jesus in certain important respects. In the first place, it is a negative, not a positive, command, a prohibition, not a precept. It tells us that we are to abstain from doing to others such things as we would dislike to have them do to us. This is plainly a different matter from putting ourselves, so far as we can, in another's place, and lavishing upon him the good that we ourselves desire. Besides, a man may be so much of an egotist, may feel so self-sufficient, as to make few claims upon others, and to be well satisfied if in general he is let alone. Such egotism, it is evident, would never be overcome by Hillel's prohibition. Only as a man recognizes the constraining and compelling force of brotherly love will he be in any large or noble way just towards his fellow-men.

3. We may advance even beyond this. The Golden Rule sums up the whole duty of man to his fellow-men; but the commentary on the rule and the quickening power that nourishes obedience thereto, is the life of him who came to *seek* the lost, to go after the wanderer, to minister to others, even at the dear sacrifice of his own life, and whose blessed activities are epitomized in the brief saying: "*Who went about doing good.*" Rightly understood and fully comprehended, this Rule of Justice which Jesus gave the world rises far above all similar sayings by heathen or "ethnic" teachers, such, for example, as that of the Greek Isocrates: "What stirs your anger when done to you by others, that do not to others;" or that of the Chinese sage, Confucius: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not to others."

4. Let us now proceed to analyze a little this Golden Rule, as a practical rule of justice. When we are commanded to do unto others as we would that they should do to us, it is assumed that we wish others to do to us that which it is right for us to receive. A child may wish to have from his father that which it is not best for him to have. In this case the child has a right to share his father's experience and wisdom, as well as his affection. Fourteen-year-old Jane Carter was told by her father that she might have her choice between a pony and another year's schooling. Jane chose the pony, but in giving it to her the father did not do justly. He did not put *himself* in her place; he only yielded his better judgment to her foolish wish. "A sensible father will consider how his children's wishes would be modified and corrected if the children had a larger knowledge and a larger experience of human life."

5. Again: In trying to follow this precept of Jesus, we must rule out of the "whatsoever" everything that is morally wrong, everything, also, that would be harmful to society. No thief wants to be arrested or imprisoned, but this is no reason why we should not have a thief arrested. Unworthy persons who beg of

us a recommendation of character wish us to do that which is sure to work injury to those who may be influenced by our careless and "good-natured" act. We do not really put curselves in the place of another person unless we think of all the relations in which that person stands to the community of which he is a member.

6. The practical working of the Golden Rule is in the direction of the greatest possible amount of well-doing. It bids us to *do*, and not to leave undone, the things we would that others should do to us. If it were generally obeyed, we should see people more careful about paying their bills as these bills become due, so as not to worry those whom they owe or cause them distress. We should also be kept from severe judgments and harsh censures of our fellow-men. And we should feel more keenly the obligation to be just before being generous; or rather, we should learn so to temper our generosity with justice that we should see how much nobler it is to be really and habitually just towards others than to indulge in those occasional spasms of generous action which often in the long run do more harm than good.

7. To illustrate: Suppose, scholars, a beggar were to come to your house with a piteous tale of poverty and distress. Moved by his appeals, you give him all the money you happen to have in your pocket, thinking, no doubt, that you are doing an act that is merciful and kind. But you afterward learn that the beggar was an impostor; that he was neither poor nor suffering; and that by being generous to him in such a hasty and thoughtless way, you were actually encouraging bad men to impose on kind people and to get their living by telling lies.

But now suppose a very different case. You are planning to give a little party to some of your schoolmates. "Are you not going to invite John Clark?" asks sister Grace. "No," you reply, "I don't see why I should ask John. He is n't in our set, you know, and I am sure some of the boys and girls I want to have would n't care to meet him." "But," urges the thoughtful Grace, "you ought to remember how kind John was to you when you were ill so long with the fever; how many times he came and read to you, and brought you pictures and flowers. Besides, John has but few social pleasures, and it would be kind in you to ask him to your party. You really owe this to your schoolmate; and were you to do for him what you would wish him to do for you if he were in your place, you would not only ask him to come, but you would do all in your power to make him enjoy himself with the rest." If this were said to *you*, would you not see that it is sometimes much harder to be truly just and kind than to give way to a momentary impulse of pity?

8. Finally, through the Golden Rule of Jesus there shines his teaching of the august greatness of every human being. "We wrong men because we have not sufficient reverence for them." But man, as Jesus reveals him, in his sonship to the Heavenly Father, is worthy of our reverence and so of our constant and long-suffering love. In every wreck of humanity we yet behold the ideal man. No layers of sin are thick enough to wholly hide the image divine. No hatred, malice, or uncharitableness can altogether disarm our love. Soldiers of the cross, carrying the strong weapons of the Spirit, we can follow our leader and everywhere overcome Evil with Good.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

"I expect," said Socrates, "to suffer a thousand ills; but no ill is so great as to do unjustly."

How much easier it is to be generous than just! Men are sometimes bountiful who are not honest. — JUNIUS.

There is nothing that is so just as love. — BEECHER.

Justice, though not so pleasant, should be always a prior duty to generosity. — ROWLAND HILL.

Perfect justice is the fruit of a profound sense of the greatness and sanctity of human nature. — R. W. DALE.

The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. — PROVERBS iv. 18.

Some persons delight more to give presents than to pay debts. — SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

A just man does justice to every man and to every thing; and then he knows there is a debt of mercy and compassion due to the infirmities of man's nature that is to be paid. — JEREMY TAYLOR.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Repeat the Golden Rule.
2. In what sermon of Jesus is it found?
3. What is that sermon about? ANS.: *The Kingdom of God.*
4. Who is the king in this kingdom, and who are his subjects? See § 2 in Lesson I.
5. In verses 7–11 of this lesson is it about the king or his subjects that Jesus speaks?
6. What is meant by *asking* things of this king, by *seeking* his blessings, and by *knocking* at his door?
7. What is it to pray to God?
8. *How* and for what must we pray if we want to get an answer to our prayers? The last part of the note on verses 7, 8.
9. What do we learn from verses 9 and 10 was the common food of the people to whom Jesus was talking?
10. What does Jesus say that a parent would not do to his child? Verses 9, 10.
11. When he says that men, though they are "evil," will yet do good deeds, what does he teach about man's nature? Note on ver. 11.
12. In this same verse what does he teach about God's nature?
13. Why does ver. 12 begin with a "*therefore*"? Note.
14. What is meant by the "law and the prophets" in ver. 12? Note.
15. Tell the story that is given in § 1.
16. Tell something about the difference between what Hillel said and the Golden Rule that Jesus taught.
17. How did Jesus illustrate the Golden Rule in his own life? § 3.
18. Tell the story about Jane Carter. § 4.
19. Did her father *really* obey the Golden Rule? Why not?
20. Tell the two "supposes" in § 7.
21. What is a good rule about being just and being generous?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What is taught about prayer in verses 7, 8?
2. Yet what kind of prayer are we taught in Matt. xxi. 22 and in James i. 6 is answered? In 1 John iii. 22?
3. What petition of the "*Lord's Prayer*" is implied in all true prayer?
4. What is the meaning of verses 9, 10?
5. What sort of a father would it be that would deceive a child in the way here spoken of?
6. In ver. 11 is the depravity or the goodness of human nature taught?
7. What is the force of the "therefore" in ver. 12? Note.
8. What is meant by the "law and the prophets" in this verse? Note.
9. What may the Golden Rule be called? § 1.
10. What saying of the Talmud resembles the Golden Rule? § 1.
11. What is the Talmud? § 1.
12. Tell the story about Rabbi Hillel. § 1.
13. How does the Golden Rule differ from the sayings of Hillel (§ 2), and of Isocrates and Confucius (§ 3)?
14. How is the life of Jesus a commentary on this Rule? § 3.
15. Are we helped in our endeavors after holiness more by the teachings or by the life of Jesus?
16. Under what conditions are we to practise the Golden Rule? §§ 4, 5.
17. What happy results would follow if this rule were generally obeyed? § 6.
18. Show by the instances supposed in § 7 that it is sometimes harder to be just than to be generous.
19. What great truth concerning human nature is implied in the Golden Rule? § 8.
20. Show how faith in this truth would prevent men from wronging one another.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Some of the necessary limitations of the Golden Rule. 2. The Golden Rule as a measure of the rights and claims of others. 3. The Golden Rule in business. 4. The Golden Rule among nations. [Read chapters 11, 12, 18, and 19 of the "Citizen and Neighbor," by Charles F. Dole.]

LESSON IV.

JUDGING OTHERS.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Judge not, that ye be not judged.—MATT. vii. 1.

MATTHEW vii. 1–6. (Mark iv. 24 and Luke vi. 37, 38, are not strictly parallel passages. See note below on verse 2.)

THE MEANING.

Verse 1. "*Judge not.*" That is, do not set yourselves up as judges of other men's failings. Do not get into the *habit* of criticising and blaming the conduct of others.

"Be not judged," that is, by Him who is the righteous Judge of all men. Compare chap. v. 7, and vi. 15.

Verse 2. "*Measure.*" The Greek word is *metron*, from which comes metre. It means here *so much as.*

"*Mete,*" an old English word meaning to deal out. The saying in this verse is given in Mark iv. 24, where it is applied to teaching and hearing; and again in Luke vi. 37, where the general meaning is the same as in Matthew, —but the words, as there given, appear to have been used on a different occasion. A truth, like a lamp, may be turned so as to shine on different objects.

Verse 3. "*Mote.*" Not a speck, but a *splinter.* A "beam" is a large piece of timber. The language is highly figurative—an example of *hyperbole.* A literal "beam" in the eye is an impossibility. The meaning is that he who censures others may have faults of his own that are as much greater as a beam of wood is larger than a shaving. The illustration of the mote and beam occurs in an old Jewish proverb; but Jesus makes a wholly different use of it in his teaching.

Verse 5. "*Hypocrite.*" Literally an *actor,* one who plays a part. Many people in the time of Jesus merely *acted* religion. They "made believe" that they were religious. This large class of hypocrites, or pious pretenders, Jesus had in mind when he warned his disciples against the *judging spirit.* Read what he says about these people in Matt. xxiii. 25–28.

THE TEACHING.

1. WHEN we are told not to judge others, it is not meant that we should never form or express an opinion about their conduct. Men are known by their actions, as a tree is known by its fruits. They show what they are by what they do. If we formed no opinion about others we should not know whom to make our friends, or whom to avoid, or how to honor those to whom honor is due.

2. It is right, too, that we should praise a good deed and censure a bad one. Things should be called by their true names. A man who steals is a thief, whether he picks my pocket, or by becoming a bank defaulter takes from me the money I had put into his keeping. That boy is a coward who is afraid of being laughed at for doing right, as much as is another boy, who is afraid to test his strength with his mates on the playground.

3. Among boys and girls at school, as well as in the larger world of men and women, there is a "public opinion" which greatly influences conduct. It is important that this public opinion should be a *right* opinion, and every one should help to make it such by commending what is good, and condemning what is evil. But here is a danger against which we need to be warned.

4. In forming and expressing opinions of the conduct and character of others, we are in

danger of acquiring the habit of fault-finding. Nothing is more common, but hardly anything is more harmful, than setting one's self up as a judge over everybody else, and getting into the way of blaming other people. The *judging spirit is a spirit of evil and always works mischief.* It breeds conceit, and destroys generosity. It is a hard, unfriendly, unloving spirit. It hinders our own growth in character as much as it lessens the happiness of others.

5. We are seldom in the position to judge rightly. We estimate by appearances, but appearances often mislead. The surface hides what is within, or we base our judgment on reports; yet there is nothing so untrustworthy as rumor, — nothing so distorted as what "*they say.*" Then, too, our common judgments of others take no note of circumstances. We do not stop to think what we might have been and have done, had we been in another's place. Indeed, those who are quick to blame others rarely stop to consider anything. Having set themselves up as judges, they think they must have an opinion about everybody and everything. Yet how little they may actually *know* of the persons or the actions that they condemn! How unjust not to put into the opposite scale the good qualities of those whom they censure! Above all, how contemptible to forget our own weaknesses and our proneness to do evil!

6. This habit of criticising and censuring others is a common failing with young people. They judge thoughtlessly and with severity because experience has not yet taught them to be charitable. They also make the mistake of *sampling* conduct, — judging it by a single act, as we judge the quality of a whole piece of cloth by examining a small fragment. But human nature is not "all of one piece." There are flaws in the best characters, and good qualities in the worst. The base and the noble, the selfish and the generous are strangely mixed. All have their besetting faults. Yet when we stop to think of our own character, we see how unjust it would be for others to judge us by our faults alone. Equally unfair and ungenerous is it for us to take the faults of another as a sample of the whole man.

7. A good story, showing how wrong it is to judge another person when we do not know all the circumstances, is told in Miss Foster's "Watch-words for Little Soldiers." The pupils at a girls' school judge one of their number to be very "mean," because she gives nothing towards a Christmas present for the teacher. What the reason was why Ruth did not give, they neither knew nor took the trouble to inquire. But Ruth had long been earning and saving, so that at Christmas time she might surprise with her gifts some poor children of her acquaintance. When the school had their Christmas party, Ruth, who went with the rest, felt sad, not only because she had been called mean, but also because she feared that her teacher, whom she loved, might misjudge her. The teacher, however, had learned by accident of the good and kind deed that Ruth had done, and openly praised her for it before the other girls, who had judged her so harshly and so unjustly. "Be kind and charitable," she added, to enforce the lesson she would teach. "Wait till you know all. Take care lest you cause pain by your hasty words. We cannot tell the motives of others' actions, and for that reason our Master bade us 'judge not.'"

8. Another important truth that we may learn from the illustration of the "mote and the beam" is that our harsh judgments of others often veil a secret leaning to the very faults that we condemn. The splinter and the beam are pieces of the same wood. "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?" An English poet speaks of men who try to make up for indulging in sins they are inclined to, by condemning those "they have no mind to." But we oftener meet with those who try to cover up their own secret inclination to some vice by complaining loudly of others for practising the same vice. "I have noticed," observes one writer, "that the sins to which men are specially sensitive in others, are precisely the sins to which they are themselves most inclined. It is the vain man who is quickest to discover vanity in others. In the crowd, it is the man that pushes hardest who thinks that everybody is pushing him." In our civil war men whose hearts were full of the spirit of treason boasted loudly of their

loyalty, and denounced other men as traitors. Among the ancient Romans the rebellious Gracchi complained against sedition, and the lax Clodius blamed the loose conduct of others. In a wholly different spirit John Newton the preacher said of a man whom he saw taken to the gallows: "There goes John Newton, but for the grace of God." Here we see a manly acknowledgment of hidden faults of temper which under great provocation might have prompted a deed of murder. If we are humbly conscious of our own weaknesses, we shall judge others with a charitable judgment, extenuating no open sin, yet setting nothing down in malice. We shall be as chivalric as the Knights of the Round Table, who took the solemn vow —

> "to speak no slander,
> No, *nor listen to it.*"

9. The punishment of the judging spirit is that he who indulges it will be judged. There is One who sees our inmost hearts, and knows us altogether. We cannot escape God's judgment. It is a divine law, that when in an uncharitable spirit and an unloving temper we harshly judge others, we expose ourselves to a just retribution. Only the merciful obtain the divine mercy; and if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our Father forgive our trespasses. God will not judge in the same way that we judge others; but His judgment will be severe because it will be a righteous judgment.

10. To save ourselves from that judgment and to be cured of the evil habit of censoriousness, we must *know ourselves.* A keen sense of our own failings will make us charitable towards others. Our great want is, not to "see ourselves as others see us," — unless, indeed, those "others" look at us with eyes of love and sympathy, — but what we most need is to know ourselves as we really are. Such self-knowledge comes from conscientious and prayerful self-searching; and it would be well for us all, old and young, if we took more time than we do for thorough self-examination. Perhaps we should then find out that the faults which in others we blame as splinters are already beams in ourselves.

11. Finally, we may all give heed to these wise words of an English preacher: "Keep your hearts so full of the Spirit of God, of love, hope, faith, and kindred activity that you will be freed by necessity from the spirit of judgment and contempt. Keep no vacant chambers, empty of better things, for such evil spirits to flock to for their revels. This is the great salvation, — to pursue the Good so purely that Evil loses its interest for us."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Upbraid no man's weakness to him to discomfort him; neither report it to disparage him, nor delight to remember it to lessen him, or to set thyself above him. — JEREMY TAYLOR.

Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment. — SHAKSPEARE, *Hamlet*, act i., scene 3.

Love is not provoked, taketh not account of evil, rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things. — ST. PAUL, 1 Cor. xiii. 5-7.

It is not good to speak evil of all whom we know bad; it is worse to judge evil of any who may prove good. To speak ill upon knowledge shows a want of charity; to speak ill upon suspicion shows a want of honesty. — WARWICK.

How different from Christ's merciful discernment would have been our clear, sharp, consistent judgments on Peter's denial, on Nicodemus's fear, on Martha's household mind! — J. H. THOM.

A man has generally the good or ill qualities which he attributes to mankind. — SHENSTONE.

He who is most charitable in his judgment is generally the least unjust. — SOUTHEY.

God's measure is the heart of the offender, — a balance which varies with every one of us, a balance so delicate that a tear cast in the other side may make the weight of error kick the beam. — LOWELL.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What are we told in ver. 1 not to do?
2. Tell the story about Ruth and her schoolmates. § 7.
3. Who will judge us if we judge others? See note on ver. 1.
4. What does Jesus say in Matt. v. 7 and vi. 15?
5. What is meant in ver. 2 by "measure"?
6. What is it to "mete"? See note on ver. 2.
7. What is a "mote"? See note on ver. 3.
8. What is a "beam"? See note on ver. 3.
9. Can anybody really have a "beam" in his eye?
10. What do ver. 3 and 4 mean?
11. What does the word "hypocrite" mean? See note on ver. 5.
12. What does Jesus say in Matt. xxiii. 25–28 about hypocrites?
13. Give examples of people who judge others for the very things that they do themselves. § 8.
14. Give some reasons why we should not judge others. § 5.
15. Tell the story of John Newton, the preacher. § 8.
16. Recite one of the *Golden Sayings*.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Against what sin are we warned in ver. 1 and 2?
2. Explain the saying about the "measure" as it occurs in Mark iv. 24 and Luke vi. 37.
3. Show how it is necessary at times to pass judgment on the deeds of others. §§ 1, 2, and 3.
4. What is the danger in doing this?
5. Give some reasons why we cannot, as a rule, judge rightly. § 5.
6. Explain what is meant by "sampling" conduct. § 6.
7. Why is the man who has corrected his own faults better fitted to "judge" these faults in another than one who has not "taken the beam from his own eye"?
8. Give the example of a wrong judgment which is related in § 7.
9. What kind of faults are men most apt to blame? § 8.
10. How did John Newton "judge" the murderer? § 8.
11. What is a good remedy for curing the "judging spirit"? § 10.
12. How is this spirit punished if we do not overcome it? § 9.
13. How may we "know ourselves"? § 10.
14. What is the connection between "self-righteousness" and a censorious spirit?
15. What class of religionists in the time of Jesus were specially self-righteous?
16. What did Jesus often call these people?
17. What do you think of the "judgment" which he pronounces upon them in Matt. xxiii.?
18. Give one or more of the *Golden Sayings*.
19. In what way did Jesus pass judgment on Peter? On Judas? On Martha? On Nicodemus?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. St. Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. xiii. 5–7. 2. The "make-believe" religion of the Pharisees. See Matthew, chapter xxiii. 3. The judgment Jesus passed upon Peter. 4. Self-righteous people, and why they cannot judge others fairly.

LESSON V.

AGAINST ANGER AND CONTEMPT.

Matt. v. 21, 22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Whosoever is angry with his brother is in danger of the judgment.—MATT. v. 22.

THE MEANING.

Verse 21. "*Ye have heard.*" It seems probable that Jesus had in mind some particular discourse on the "Law" which one of the Scribes of that time had just been giving to the people.

"*By them of old time.*" The true reading is given in the Revised Version: *to* them, etc. The meaning is, "of old, that is, for centuries, the people have been taught, 'Thou shalt not kill,' etc." The command is of course taken from the Decalogue, Exod. xx. 13; but the sentence that follows, "And whosoever," etc., is what the Scribes or Rabbis *added* to the command to show that a murderer was liable to an external penalty. "*In danger of the judgment,*"—that is, is liable to be tried by the local Jewish court. See § 2.

Verse 22. "*I say unto you.*" Jesus opposes to the narrow interpretation given by the Scribes an unfolding of the deeper meaning which the old command implied. What we are most to dread, he teaches, is not the outward punishment of a crime, but the inward penalties which are sure to follow all sinful affections. "*Angry with his brother.*" This word "brother" points to what has already been explained in Lesson I., that the leading idea of Jesus is the grand doctrine of human brotherhood. (Read 1 John iii. 15.) The anger referred to is unloving and hostile anger, the angry feeling that swells so soon to deep and settled hatred. The expression, "*without a cause,*" is omitted in the Revised Version because it is not found in the best manuscripts. It certainly is not needed, since all unbrotherly anger *is* "without a cause,"—is as senseless as it is wicked. "*Shall be in danger of the judgment.*" The "judgment," or local Jewish court, did not punish angry persons. The meaning plainly is, that the man who cherishes feelings of hostile anger is as bad in reality—in the sight of God who sees the heart—as is the man who is said by the Scribes to be in danger of punishment at the hands of the local court. "*Raca,*" a word of ridicule, meaning "empty pate," or "fool." "*The council,*"—that is, the Sanhedrin. See § 2. The meaning here is that bad as angry feelings are in themselves, they are worse when they are expressed in cutting language and biting sarcasm. "*Fool!*" a word of contempt meaning "Wicked one!" or "Wretch!" a stronger word of opprobrium than "Raca,"—a word of insult intended to rankle in the heart. "*Hell-fire.*" In the Revised Version this reads, "hell of fire," but in the Marginal Note we find the correct expression, "Gehenna of fire." (See last sections of §§ 2 and 3.) It is important that this phrase, "Gehenna of fire," should be correctly understood. There is no real difficulty in getting at its meaning. Gehenna, literally the valley of the children

of Hinnom, was a deep, narrow glen to the south of Jerusalem, where in ancient times the idolatrous Jews had sacrificed their children by fire to the god Moloch. At a later time King Josiah, to express his abhorrence of the old idolatry, defiled the place with dead bodies, so that to have one's body buried there was to suffer a most hateful indignity. (Read Jer. vii. 22, 23.) Thus the valley came to be in reality a place of horrors. Even the fire that was kindled in it to consume the filth and the bones gave it an added terror. To be slain, and then have one's body thrown into this reeking and smoking valley, would be a punishment deserved only by the vilest of criminals. This extreme penalty, therefore, Jesus refers to as the symbol of a kind of spiritual punishment, severer in intensity than the punishments which were symbolized by the executioner's sword and by stoning to death. Neither in this passage nor in any one of the four other instances in which Jesus uses the word "Gehenna" is any countenance given to the doctrine that unending punishment awaits sinners in the future world.

THE TEACHING.

1. In this extract from the Sermon on the Mount we have a comparison of the new Law of mercy and the old Law of threatening. "The old demanded obedience in outward action; the new was to permeate the thoughts. The old contained the rule of conduct; the new, the secret of obedience. The command, 'Thou shalt not murder,' was henceforth extended to angry words and feelings of hatred." The whole passage well illustrates the fundamental principle of the teaching of Jesus, which is that religion is an inner life, an affection of the heart, a disposition of the soul.

2. But in order to understand the full force of what Jesus said, we must try to put ourselves in the place of his hearers. "Ye have heard," he says to them; or, more exactly, "Ye heard," as if he had reference not to the usual expositions of the Mosaic law by the Scribes in the synagogues, but to some recent talk on the subject by one of the Rabbis. Against all such narrow interpretations of the Law, Jesus now sets forth the true nature of moral conduct. To illustrate this he refers to facts that were familiar to all who heard him. They knew that a man charged with the crime of murder was in danger of the "judgment," — that is, he would be tried before the local court of twenty-three elders, and if found guilty would be put to death by the sword. They knew, too, what the "Council" or the Sanhedrin was, — the Supreme Court of their nation that held its sessions in some room within the Temple at Jerusalem. This court of seventy-one justices had jurisdiction over other capital offences besides murder, and could condemn a criminal to be punished, not by the quick process of the sword, but by the slow and cruel method of stoning to death. And these Jewish hearers who were listening to Jesus also knew that there was one place which was more dreaded than the executioner's block or the fatal volley of stones, — namely, the awful "Gehenna of fire," that great Valley of Hinnom below Jerusalem, which had become "the common sink of all the filth and corruption in the city, where ghastly fires were kept burning to preserve it from absolute putrefaction."

3. Consider now what it was that Jesus said to this audience of Jews. He told them first that the man who cherishes unholy anger in his heart is as sinful as an actual murderer. If earthly courts could punish wicked feelings, then such a man would deserve a murderer's fate. But he goes on to say that there is an inward disposition of the heart which is worse than anger. This is the spirit of ridicule, — the anger which finds vent in cutting remarks and derisive speech. Rightly judged, such a spirit is more unbrotherly, more inhuman, than the passion which incites to murder. To a certain extent it partakes of the spirit of that passion. The man who is possessed by it becomes a hater of his fellow-men, and is fit for any outward act of wrong. Could human tribunals punish such sin, the guilty one should be brought before the highest court and sentenced

to the severest and most painful penalty. There is, however, a lower depth of sinful affection than the feeling of anger or the spirit of ridicule. This is the *spirit of contempt*, the blackest and worst of all these inward dispositions. What punishment would this fearful guilt of scorn deserve if there were any human tribunal that could take cognizance of it? There was but one kind of judicial sentence which Jesus could refer to that would make his Jewish hearers realize the exceeding sinfulness of this most hateful sin, — namely, "the casting forth of the unburied corpse amid the fires and worms of the polluted Valley of Hinnom," the "Gehenna of fire."

4. There is, then, a gradation in these sinful affections which Jesus so vividly pictures, each exceeding in intensity the one that went before it. Into each of them, as Tholuck observes, "there enters a degree of that passion which, under given circumstances, would result in the deed of murder." But while anger *may* be sinful, and while sarcastic speech at the expense of another shows always an unbrotherly heart, contempt of one's brethren is the greatest of these sins. The emphasis of Jesus is laid upon the sins themselves and their intrinsic hatefulness, not upon any outward punishments. Indeed the punishments he mentions are all, so far as these sins are concerned, *imaginary* penalties. No one of his hearers could have supposed for a moment that the local Jewish court would actually punish anger, or the Sanhedrin pass sentence upon derisive speaking. Still less would they think of the man that was guilty of contempt as liable to have his body, after death, thrown into the smoking Vale of Hinnom. The reference to three grades of punishment was only a pictorial method of setting forth the true character of the three kinds of evil dispositions.

5. Nothing therefore could be a grosser misconception of what Jesus here taught, than to represent him as holding over the contemptuous man the threat of "hell-fire." The "Gehenna of fire" of which he spoke was perfectly understood by every one who heard him as meaning, in its literal sense, the place where a criminal's dead body might be cast in token of the excessive enormity of his crime. But the fire that burned there was a purifying fire, to prevent the corruption in the valley from rising in pestilential odors to destroy the "holy city." Used as a figure of speech it could symbolize, in this connection, only a spiritual punishment that would be one degree severer than the penalty which in the divine kingdom follows the sin of derision. It is no modern idea which we "read into" the teaching of Jesus in this passage, but the very essence of the teaching itself, that the real "hell," the true spiritual "Gehenna," is not a burning prison, but a sinful heart. "So long as we are evil and impure and unloving, so long where we are is hell," *and there is no other.*

6. History and the common experiences of our every-day life abound with examples of this unchristlike disposition of contempt. "Wherever the weak, the poor, the ignorant, the lowly, are alienated and wronged, there contempt is present and predominant." The contemptuous man is the Pharisee in morals, who thanks God that he is not as other men are; the bigot in religion who fancies himself the favorite of heaven, and looks down on his "deluded" fellow-men; the scorner in society who delights to expose the failings of others and to declaim against the hollowness of human life. Among young people this hateful spirit of contempt is seen in those who show neither admiration nor reverence for what is above them, while towards their mates they are conceited and exclusive, unloving and hence unlovely.

7. Opposed to this sin of contempt is the whole tenor of the teaching of Christ and the constraining force of his Divine example. Follow him in his active ministry of love and see his tender care for all the victims of the unfeeling world's contempt! Hear from his gracious lips the heavenly truths of the dignity of humanity, the sonship of man to the Highest! And learn from him how to banish from the heart all hatred except the righteous "hate of hate;" all scorn but the holy "scorn of scorn."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. — PROV. xvi. 32.

Blessed is the man that sitteth not in the seat of the scornful. — PSALMS i 1.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. — 1 JOHN iii. 15.

Contempt of humanity is the most notable cause of wrong to humanity. — HENRY GILES.

Christ saw much in this world to weep over, and much to pray over; but he saw nothing in it to look upon with contempt. — E. H. CHAPIN.

Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn. — TENNYSON.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What was said to them "of old time"? Ver. 21.
2. What is the Sixth Commandment? Exod. xx. 13.
3. What was it to be in danger of *the judgment?* Note on ver. 21 and § 2.
4. What does Jesus say in ver. 22?
5. What is it to be *angry with our brother?*
6. What kind of anger is meant?
7. When is it right to be angry?
8. What did Jesus mean when he said the angry man was in danger of the judgment?
9. Who does St. John say is as bad as a murderer? 1 John iii. 15.
10. What does the word "Raca" mean? Note on ver. 22.
11. What kind of a court was the "council," or Sanhedrin? Note on ver. 22 and § 2.
12. Was the man who said "Raca" *really* in danger of being punished by the "council"?
13. What then did Jesus mean by saying so? Note on ver. 22 and § 3.
14. What did the word translated "fool" really mean? Note.
15. What kind of a spirit was shown by using such a word? § 3.
16. What kind of punishment did Jesus say this *spirit of contempt* deserved? § 3.
17. Explain the words "Gehenna of fire." (Read carefully the last sections of §§ 2 and 3 and of the note on ver. 22.)
18. What is the only "hell" there is? (Read last part of § 5.)
19. Give some examples of the "spirit of contempt." § 6.
20. Recite Psalms i. 1.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What may we infer from the words, "ye heard," as to the occasion of this part of the Sermon on the Mount? Note on ver. 21 and § 1.
2. What sentence had the Jewish Scribes added to the Sixth Commandment? Ver. 21.
3. What did Jesus say about it? Ver. 22.
4. What is the significance of the word "brother" in ver. 22? Note.
5. What did St. John say about hating one's brother? 1 John iii. 15.
6. Explain the words "Raca" and "fool." Note.
7. Explain the "judgment" and the "council." Note and § 2.
8. How may we define the sins indicated by using the words "Raca" and "fool"? § 3.
9. Which of these is the worse sin, and why?
10. What punishment did Jesus say the *scorner* was liable to?
11. What was "Gehenna"? Note and § 2.
12. What did the added words, "of fire," mean? Note and § 2.
13. What kind of spiritual punishment did the "Gehenna of fire," as here used, symbolize? §§ 3, 4, and 5.
14. Give examples of the *evil spirit of contempt.* § 6.
15. What is the logical result of thinking meanly of human nature?
16. In this lesson, what contrast between the "old" and the "new" Law is illustrated? § 1.
17. What great and fundamental principle of the teachings of Jesus is emphasized? § 1.
18. What is the meaning of the last of the *Golden Sayings* in this lesson?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The climax in the three sins of Anger, Derision, and Contempt. 2. The words translated "hell" in the Bible. 3. Some account of the Valley of Hinnom. 4. Some account of the Sanhedrin.

LESSON VI.

RECONCILIATION AND FORBEARANCE.

Matt. v. 23, 24, and 38–42.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. — Matt. v. 24.

THE MEANING.

Verse 23. "*Therefore.*" The duty of seeking forgiveness is here laid down in close connection with the teaching of Jesus about the sins of anger and contempt. (See Lesson V.) One who cherishes anger or feels contemptuously towards his brother is really wronging that brother as much as if he had openly done him harm. Let him, "therefore," regard it as his first and most pressing duty to be *at one* again with his brother man. "*If thou bring thy gift,*" etc. The Jewish worshipper in the Temple brought his gift to the altar, that the priests might offer it upon the same. Oxen, sheep, and goats, turtle-doves and pigeons, were appointed as the "gifts" for sacrifice.

Verse 24. "*First be reconciled,*" etc. The teaching plainly is, that to love our neighbor as we love ourselves is the most important part of true worship. As the English poet sings: —

> "He prayeth best who loveth best."

And Whittier tells us that the best "litanies" are —

> "sweet offices
> Of love and gratitude;"

and that the heart must —

> "The *inward* altars raise."

Verse 38. "*An eye for an eye,*" etc. The old Jewish law, as it stands in Exod. xxi. 24, was addressed to the judges to guide them in fixing the amount of penalty that was incurred by a person who had wilfully injured another. Its object was to restrain revenge. In a rude stage of society it imposed a fearful penalty as a terror to wrong-doers. Besides, it made all offenders equal before the law. A man who was rich would not care very much if his punishment was only paying a fine. But the law made him liable to lose his own eye if, in his rage, he put out a poor man's eye. Now this law the Scribes in the times of Jesus applied in a bad sense, as if it encouraged men to seek in a revengeful spirit an exact redress for every wrong that might be done to them. *Against this interpretation* of the ancient law, and against the whole spirit of retaliation, Jesus teaches that we are *never to seek for redress as a matter of personal revenge.*

"*Resist not evil.*" The true rendering is, *resist not the evil person*, that is, the wrong-doer. John xviii. 22, 23, shows that Jesus did not obey this precept literally. (Compare St. Paul's conduct, narrated in Acts xxiii. 3.)

Verse 39. "*Right cheek.*" As most men strike with the right hand, the *left* cheek would be hit. But the "right" is always mentioned in order *before* the "left."

Verse 40. "*Take thy coat,*" etc. The "coat" was the narrow tunic or under-garment made of cotton or linen, and worn next to the body. The "cloak" was the loose robe worn as an outer garment, and was much more costly than the "coat." The meaning is, that it is sometimes better to yield our rights than to insist on them. It is wiser to give up even more than is demanded than to keep up a continual wrangle and debate.

Verse 41. "*Whosoever shall compel,*" etc. This refers to the right of the Roman mail-carrier to press any one into his service. Such employment would be peculiarly hateful to a Jew. But it is better always to be generously helpful than do a required service in a quarrelsome temper.

Verse 42. Only a *generous and obliging spirit* is here required of us. When we are asked to "give" or to "lend," we are not to turn away in an unbrotherly temper, but see what can be done, and how we may be able most wisely and effectively to help our neighbor.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE duty of granting forgiveness will be considered in the next lesson. Here the duty of *seeking* forgiveness is placed before us. We are commanded to go to the brother whom we have injured, and be reconciled to him. How hard a thing this is for most men to do may be inferred from the proverb which we find in many languages: "The offender never pardons," or, in another form, "Men always hate those whom they have hurt." When we have wronged any one, Pride quickly comes to the aid of Hate. We feel that because *we* did the act there was a provocation to justify it. Yet as "sons of one family," children of an All-loving Father, we must rid ourselves of such unkind feelings. Malice is as wicked as murder. Anger and contempt are ungodly and inhuman. Love and Duty urge the same line of conduct. We must *be reconciled* to our brother.

2. Still further to emphasize this duty, Jesus makes it an act of religion. In doing this he speaks in the spirit of the old Hebrew prophets. They, too, made morality an inseparable part of religion. "To obey is better than sacrifice." "I desired mercy and not sacrifice." "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy?" Outward forms and ceremonies have their place, but the first place in all true worship must be assigned to the humble and contrite heart. If that be wanting, no costliest offering at the altar is of any value. And how can the heart be right before God if there be in it ill feelings towards one's brother-man? "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother," he says that which is false; for he *cannot* love God so long as he cherishes any, even the least, hatred towards one of God's children.

3. See, now, how true to life is the picture which Jesus draws in order to set this great truth plainly forth. He is talking to Jews, and he takes his hearers in imagination to the great Temple at Jerusalem. A man has entered the Temple, bringing to the "Court of the Israelites" the lamb that he is to offer up in sacrifice. On the other side of the low railing, near the sacrificial "altar," stands the priest, waiting to receive the offering of the worshipper. Everything is ready for the solemn service. Everything? No. The lamb that is to be slain is ready, and the priest who is to slay it and present it on the altar is ready, too. But one thing this worshipper has forgotten to prepare. He has neglected nothing that the mere ceremony requires, but he has omitted to look into his own heart to see whether *that* was right. By the sacrifice of the lamb he is to express his desire for God's forgiveness. But the divine forgiveness can be given only to those who forgive their fellow-men. None but the merciful can obtain mercy. And now in this awful moment, just as the worshipper is on the point of asking for pardon from above, there rises within him the recollection of the brother whom he has injured and towards whom his hate is still aflame within his breast. Not from such unholy fires can the smoke of a true sacrifice ascend! Leave there, O sinful man, the unoffered gift. God can wait for your worship. Go your way. Find your injured brother. Tell him you have wronged him, and in doing so have wronged your own soul. Ask his forgiveness. Be reconciled to him. Make amends for what you have done. Be a true brother, that you may be a true son; and then — then, after you have restored the right relations between your brother and yourself, go back to the altar, and in a loving, filial spirit offer your gift to the Father in heaven.

4 So much for Christ's teaching of the duty of reconciliation. Another duty, closely allied to this, is also taught us in the Sermon on the Mount, — the duty of forbearance, of cherishing a lenient and conciliatory spirit. The language in which this instruction is given us may

very easily be misunderstood. For Jesus said, "Resist not him that is evil." Yet we all know that wicked men *must* be resisted and that evil must be put down. He also said, giving an instance of non-resistance, "Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." But to do this literally would be to irritate an angry man to fury. We might also say that since in decent society men are not apt to strike one another on the cheek, to obey this command in a literal sense would not be so very hard. Either way, then, if we take these words literally, we shall be likely to miss their meaning; for Jesus certainly would have us "wise as serpents" in our dealings with bad men. He told his first disciples when they were persecuted in one city to flee into another; to go away, that is, from evil-doers, and not wait to let them do more harm. And just as certainly Jesus is here laying down some great principle of action that even we who are not likely to be struck on the right cheek should follow in our relations towards others.

5. This is the principle of *forbearance*. Its first command is: "As much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." It implies a spirit of meekness, a willingness to waive one's own claims and preferences, a considerate and patient dealing with the faults of others. "Never to feel personal resentment against those who recklessly misrepresent us, who slander us, who insult us; and even when duty requires us to resist or to redress an injury, to be as free from the spirit of revenge as a judge on the bench when he sentences a thief to be imprisoned; to be righteously indignant at wrong-doing, but not to suffer the sense of the wrong done to ourselves to exaggerate the guilt of the wrong-doer, or to make us desire for our personal satisfaction that he should suffer for his offence;" — all this is included in the difficult virtue of forbearance.

6. But more than this is required of us. We are always and everywhere to strive to "overcome evil with good." See how we can do this in our every-day life. When harshly or insultingly spoken to, we can give "the soft answer that turneth away wrath." When our wishes are crossed, instead of being vexed, as if somebody were trying to spite us, we can bear the petty disappointment and cheerfully "make the best of it." When an injury is done to us, we can check our angry passions, keep back the impulse of revenge, and "stop and think" how we may make the wrong-doer our friend. We can conquer the pride, the hate, and the uncharitableness which make a great wrong out of a small one, and we can rise so far above all malice and spite that we shall always be ready to pity and forgive.

7. Forbearance is, indeed, only one application of the great law of loving our neighbor as ourself. It is acting on the precept, "Make the best of one another," that is, make the most of what is good in others. It is a very easy thing to make the worst of others, — to fix our attention constantly on their faults, and so keep up strife, and hatred, and heart-burnings. The hard thing, but the *grand* thing, is to be so intent upon seeing the good there is in others, and so eager to help them to be good, that we can bear contradiction and slights and even injuries without being turned from our purpose. St. Paul gives us a beautiful description of this exalted virtue where he tells us that charity, that is, love, "suffereth long and is kind, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil, . . . beareth all things, . . . endureth all things."

8. But he who taught his disciples to be kind and forbearing is himself the best example of what this virtue means. Who so meek, so patient, so long-suffering, as he? "When he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." If we have "the same mind that was also in Christ," if the *spirit* of Jesus is ours, we shall fully understand what he means us to do when he tells us not to resist the one who is doing evil, and bids us turn the other cheek to him that smites us. We shall then be brave and fearless against all forms of wrong, while we shall also be so self-forgetting, so filled with love, that our meekness and our forbearance will be among our strongest weapons in the long and hard fight that we must wage against the evil that is in the world.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Nothing drives out darkness so much as light. — DEAN STANLEY.

The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something, every day they live,
To pity and perhaps forgive.
COWPER.

Be not swift to take offence, —
Anger is a foe to sense, —
Let it pass!
If for good you suffer ill,
Oh, be kind and gentle still, —
Let it pass!

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Repeat verses 23 and 24.
2. What "gifts" did the Jews bring to the altar? Note on ver. 23.
3. Who *offered* the sacrifice? Note.
4. *Where* was the altar of sacrifice? Note and § 3.
5. Tell again what Jesus commands the worshipper to do. Ver. 24.
6. Repeat 1 John iv. 20.
7. Repeat the line of the English poet given in the note on ver. 24.
8. Tell in your own words the substance of § 3.
9. Repeat ver. 38.
10. In what part of the Old Testament are these words found? Note on ver. 38.
11. What did that old Jewish law mean? Note.
12. But what had the Scribes made it mean?
13. What did Jesus teach about it? Ver. 39.
14. Are not evil-doers to be resisted?
15. What, then, did Jesus mean by his words in ver. 39? § 4. (Read this § 4 carefully.)
16. What do we call the *principle* which Jesus here lays down? § 5.
17. Explain ver. 40. Note.
18. Explain ver. 41. Note.
19. Give examples of forbearance. § 6.
20. What does St. Paul say about "Love . . . suffering long," etc.? § 7.
21. What is said about the forbearance of Jesus? § 8.
22. What does ver. 42 mean? Note.
23. Repeat the last verse in the *Golden Sayings*.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What duty is taught us in verses 23, 24? § 1.
2. How is this teaching connected with the verses which precede? Note on ver. 23.
3. What kind of a worshipper is addressed in the words: "If then *thou* art offering thy gift," etc?
4. What "gifts" were usually brought to the altar? Note.
5. *Who offered* these gifts?
6. Give some further account of the Jewish Temple worship. § 3.
7. What does Jesus here teach about the character of true and acceptable worship?
8. What did St. John say on this point? 1 John iv. 20.
9. Explain the Jewish law quoted in ver. 38. Note on ver. 38.
10. How had the Scribes perverted its meaning? Note.
11. Against the teaching of the Scribes, what principle did Jesus here lay down? § 5.
12. Did Jesus or his first apostles literally obey this precept of non-resistance? Note on ver. 39.
13. Show how a literal obedience to the precept about turning the "other cheek" to the smiter goes beyond, or falls short of, the obedience which Jesus demands. § 4.
14. How, then, may we render this obedience? § 5.
15. Illustrate this further by examples. § 6.
16. Explain ver. 40. Note.
17. Explain ver. 41. Note.
18. Show how Christian forbearance carries out the Golden Rule. § 7.
19. How does the life of Jesus illustrate this virtue?
20. What is meant by the precept in ver. 42? Note.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The Temple at Jerusalem, its structure, appointments, etc. 2. The offering of sacrifices as an act of worship. 3. The Quaker doctrine and practice of non-resistance. 4. Forbearance compatible with righteous resentment.

LESSON VII.

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

Matt. xviii. 21–35.

GOLDEN TEXT. — If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. — Matt. vi. 14.

THE MEANING.

Verse 21. "*Forgive.*" The Greek word means, literally, to *let go from,* — that is, to let a person off from a debt or an accusation. But the idea of forgiveness goes farther than this, and is well expressed by the English word *for-give.* When we forgive any one, we not only pardon the injury, but we also, in a spirit of love, *give ourselves for* the one who has injured us.

"*Until seven times.*" In some of the schools of the Rabbis it was taught that a man might pardon an injury *three* times, but no more; Peter proposed to do a little better than this, and to draw the line at *seven* times. Perhaps he remembered that Jesus had told his disciples that their righteousness should "exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees." Or it may be that he took the number seven because it was a *sacred* number with the Jews.

Verse 22. "*Seventy times seven.*" The best commentators say that this should be *seventy times and seven.* In either case the meaning is the same. We are to keep on forgiving, without stopping to count the number of times.

Verse 23. "*Kingdom of heaven,*" — that is, God's kingdom, the kingdom for which we pray when we say, "Thy kingdom come;" the kingdom in which the king is the All-loving Father, and all the subjects are brethren. "*Is like,*" — that is, in respect to this matter of not limiting forgiveness. "*Take account of his servants.*" In the Revised Version this is "make a reckoning with his servants," — that is, settle accounts with them.

Verse 24. "*Ten thousand talents.*" A talent was a *weight* of money, not a fixed sum. Ten thousand *Attic* talents were equivalent to ten million dollars.

Verse 25. The practice of selling a man and all that belonged to him, for debt, was common among ancient nations.

Verse 26. "*Worshipped,*" — that is, humbly paid homage to him, as a slave prostrates himself before his master.

Verse 27. "*Loosed him,*" — that is, released him. He had been brought to the king under guard.

Verse 28. "*The same servant,*" — emphatic, meaning that *very* servant whose enormous debt had just been forgiven. "*A hundred pence.*" The coin here mentioned is the *denarius,* equivalent to seventeen cents. The whole sum, therefore, was but seventeen dollars. "*Took him by the throat.*" The old Roman law allowed a man to drag his debtor before the judge, holding him by the throat. "*Pay me that thou owest.*" The creditor does not mention the amount of the debt, but shows his hard-heartedness by using this gruff and haughty expression, — as if he had said, "I 'll have you pay me all you owe."

Verse 31. "*What was done,*" — that is, what was going on. These fellow-servants were "very sorry" to see such an exhibition of cruelty and ill-will.

Verse 34. "*Tormentors.*" These were the jailers who, besides keeping the man in prison, would also torture him to make him tell whether he had any means of paying some part, at least, of his debt.

Verse 35. "*So likewise,*" etc. Jesus nowhere teaches that God's ways are like the ways of sinful men. What he does teach is this: that there can be nothing in common between the spirit of an All-loving God and the spirit of

an unmerciful, unsympathizing, and unforgiving man. The divine forgiveness establishes a happy, childlike relation of the soul with God. But the unkind and unloving soul is outside of this happy relation, and must suffer the penalty which it brings upon itself.

"*From your hearts*," — that is, in genuine love and sympathy, not grudgingly, as men sometimes offer forgiveness. Read again what was said in the note to ver. 21 about the meaning of the word *for-give*.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE best way to learn what forgiveness of injuries means is to look at some examples of this virtue. In the story of the *Unmerciful Servant* the king of a great country finds that the governor, or satrap, of one of the provinces has been dishonest in making returns of the royal revenues. Such dishonesty on an enormous scale we may read of in the histories of Greece and of the kingdom of Alexander the Great. For a crime of this magnitude — the stealing of ten millions of dollars — this under-ruler deserves the most severe punishment. But when his "lord" calls him into his presence and demands a settlement, the satrap falls down before him, entreats him to have patience with him, and promises to do all that he can to make up the loss. On hearing this and seeing how penitent the satrap is, the king lets him off, — he *forgives* him. Not only does he grant the satrap's request, but, in his large and free compassion, he goes far beyond what was asked, he forgives the whole enormous debt. We are not told why this king showed such great mercy, and practised a forgiveness that was almost without a limit. We must suppose that he had reasons for his action, although we are not informed what those reasons were. The purpose of Jesus in relating this part of the parable was to show how ready God is to forgive. His ways in forgiving rise above the common ways of men high as heaven rises above the earth. It was necessary, therefore, in order to illustrate the divine mercy, to make the king in the story do that which ordinarily no human ruler would do.

2. Still, his act shows us very plainly what *human* forgiveness is. It is a twofold act. The king, who has received a great injury, by the loss of millions of dollars which belonged to him, suddenly ceases to be angry with the offender. He listens to his cry for patience, is willing to grant his request for time to pay the debt, and puts away from between the offender and himself all feelings of anger and resentment. But he goes farther even than this. He is so forgiving that he remits the punishment of the offence, and lets the satrap off from the whole debt. A better illustration of a free and full forgiveness of an injury could hardly be imagined.

3. Let us now suppose another case, of a more familiar sort. A servant has stolen some money from his master. Weighed down by the sense of his wrong-doing, he at length goes to his master, tells him all, says he is sorry, and asks to be forgiven. His master says to him: "What you tell me pains me more than words can express. I had fully trusted you and never thought for a moment that you *could* deceive me. Even now I feel that you must have been sorely tempted or you would never have done this deed. Your better nature was overcome. But in your better self I still have faith; and so from my heart I forgive you. You do not ask, and I cannot afford, to have no payment made of the money that you took. I will be patient with you and give you ample time to earn it. But of the wrong deed itself you shall never hear me speak. That deed I forgive and henceforth forget. I love you and I trust you. Go, and sin no more."

4. Another story may help those who study these lessons to understand still better what it is to forgive. A school-teacher loaned to one of his pupils, whom we will call John, a valuable pocket-knife. John, who had borrowed the knife to finish cutting out a toy-boat which he was making, had the misfortune to hit the blade against a nail and give it an ugly dent. Instead, however, of taking the knife back and confessing to the teacher what had happened,

he hid it away. As nothing was said to him about the borrowed article, he thought the teacher must have forgotten it. Yet day after day, when he passed the place where he had hidden the knife, he seemed to hear a voice saying to him: "Oh, John, take it back!" After a time this grew so unbearable that he took the knife and threw it into a swamp that lay just beyond the woods through which he passed on his way to school. But whenever his walk led him into the neighborhood of the swamp, he seemed to hear again the voice that said: "Oh, take it back, John!" One day the teacher spoke to the school on the duty of repentance. A single sentence from the teacher's lips sank deep down into John's heart: "*It is never too late to repent.*" As he walked home he said to himself: "If it 's never too late to repent, then I 'll find the teacher's knife, and take it back to him, and tell him how sorry I am." So he did. When he had told all, he added, "And now, teacher, I hope you 'll forgive me." "Forgive you, John?" replied the teacher. "Why, I forgave you long ago. I did not believe you would keep the knife, and I felt sure that if you had lost it you would sometime come and tell me of it. It was not the knife that I cared about; *I cared for you*, and I am only too happy to say that from my heart I forgive you. I do not believe you will ever do such a thing again." This story, which is *true*, shows us that the spirit of forgiveness is a spirit of tender-hearted love, that moves a man to *give* himself in sympathy *for* those who injure him, — a spirit of gentle patience that has "its perfect work."

5. Forgiveness has well been called a *Christian* virtue. Jesus not only taught it, but continually practised it; and so powerful was his example in this respect that his first disciples, catching its inspiration, put away from their hearts all hatred and malice, and the thirst for revenge which prevailed in the world around them, and became tender-hearted and forgiving. Read in the Book of Acts the beautiful story of Stephen forgiving the cruel Jews who stoned him to death. Read, too, the story of the "divine tragedy" on Calvary, and hear again the dying prayer of Jesus: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And do not forget that the great lesson of the gospel is that "no man can perfectly forgive another unless his will is one with God's." We must be true sons of the Heavenly Father in order to cherish a forgiving spirit towards our weak and erring brethren.

6. The last part of the parable of the *Unmerciful Servant* shows us that the sin which is not forgiven is the *sin of unforgivingness.* There is nothing arbitrary in the statement that God does not forgive the unforgiving. So long as a man has an unforgiving temper of mind, he can no more be forgiven than a man who has no eyes can see. It is as necessary, in order to be able to receive forgiveness as to be able to forgive, that we should have faith in human nature, sympathy with those who are weak and erring, and a loving patience towards those who do us any wrong. "The full forgiveness is when a man feels that God is forgiving him; and this cannot be while he opposes himself to the very essence of God's will."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

To err is human; to forgive, divine. — POPE.

He is below himself that is not above an injury. — QUARLES.

When thou forgivest, the man who has pierced thy heart stands to thee in the relation of the sea-worm that perforates the shell of the mussel, which straightway closes the wound with a pearl. — RICHTER.

The more all men are regarded by us as our brothers, the more we shall feel their sins; and unless a man feels the sins of others he cannot forgive them. — E. A. ABBOTT.

God's forgiveness is to be the type of ours. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." There is no genuine forgiveness while any estrangement or coldness remains. — R. W. DALE.

Never is the human heart more in the image of God than when it pardons with a free and generous bounty; never does a man seem to tower up to the dignity and happiness of the Creator more than when he dispenses mercy and foregoes every remembrance of his wrongs. — HENRY GILES.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What question did Peter ask in ver. 21?
2. Why did he say, "Until *seven* times"?
3. How did Jesus reply in ver. 22?
4. What did he mean by this answer? See note on ver. 22.
5. What does the word "forgive" mean? See note on ver. 21.
6. What is the "kingdom of heaven"? See note on ver. 23.
7. In what way is it "like a certain king, etc."? See note on ver. 23.
8. What kind of a servant is spoken of in ver. 24? See § 1.
9. What was a "talent"? See note on ver. 24.
10. How many of our dollars were these "ten thousand talents" equal to? Note.
11. Relate what happened when this "servant" was brought before the king. Ver. 24–27.
12. What did this very same servant afterward do? Ver. 28–30.
13. How much of our money were the "one hundred pence" equal to? See note on ver. 28.
14. How was this unforgiving servant punished? Ver. 34.
15. How did Jesus apply the lesson of the story in ver. 35? Note.
16. Tell the story of the servant related in § 3.
17. Tell the story of John related in § 4.
18. How did Stephen forgive his murderers? See Acts vii. 60.
19. How did Jesus forgive those who crucified him? See Luke xxiii. 34.
20. Tell in your own words what it is to forgive an injury.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What was the occasion that led Jesus to relate this parable?
2. Why did Peter say, "Until *seven* times"?
3. What kind of a mind does such a question indicate?
4. What is the meaning of the reply that Jesus made to Peter?
5. Explain the two meanings of the word *forgive*. See note on ver. 21.
6. What is the point of resemblance between the "kingdom of heaven" and the relation of the king to the servant in the parable?
7. Describe the "servant" mentioned in ver. 24.
8. Explain ver. 25. Note.
9. What did Jesus wish to teach by this part of the parable?
10. How does the king's conduct illustrate what human forgiveness is? See § 2.
11. What does the last part of the parable (ver. 28–30) teach?
12. What is the teaching of ver. 35? See § 6.
13. Why is forgiveness called a Christian virtue? See § 5.
14. Relate the story given in § 3.
15. Show how there can be true forgiveness even when there is no remission of punishment.
16. When the penalty is remitted, what is the chief significance of the remission?
17. Show how the teacher exercised forgiveness in the instance given in § 4.
18. What other familiar parable of Jesus forcibly illustrates this giving of one's self in love and sympathy to an offender?
19. What besides love, and sympathy, and a spirit of sacrifice is necessary to make us forgiving? (Read again §§ 3, 4.)
20. What limits, if any, should be set to forgiveness?
21. Is a just resentment against wrong-doing consistent with a forgiving spirit? (If the resentment is not personal, and so is unselfish, the feeling of pain which the sight of wrong-doing awakens will move us to do all we can to put it away from between another and ourselves.)

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Explain Matt. xviii. 15–17. 2. Divine and human forgiveness compared.[1] 3. The feelings that a Christian ought to cherish towards *unrepentant* offenders. 4. Give precepts or illustrations of forgiveness from other sacred books than the Old and New Testaments.

[1] Read "The Christian Doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sin." By Rev. James Freeman Clarke, D. D. Boston: American Unitarian Association.

LESSON VIII.

"SONS OF PEACE" AND "SONS OF THUNDER."

Matt. v. 9 and Luke ix. 51–56. (Read also Luke x. 5, 6, and Mark iii. 17.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.— MATT. v. 9.

THE MEANING.

Matt. v. 9. "*Peace-makers,*" — that is, those who are lovers of peace, and who, therefore, not only live peaceably with others, but also help others to dwell together in peace. Read Luke ii. 14; Mark ix. 50; Rom. xii. 18.

"*Children of God.*" Better as in the Revised Version, "Sons of God." As Jesus was called the Prince of Peace, so those who like him labor for the things that make for peace shall be called, that is, recognized and honored as, true sons of the Heavenly Father. In Rom. xv. 33, 2 Cor. xiii. 11, and other passages in the Epistles, God is spoken of as the "God of peace;" and in the words of Phil. iv. 7, which are so often used as a Benediction, the "peace of God" is spoken of. To be at one with God and to live in peace with our fellow-men is to be in the best and truest sense happy or "blessed." To help others to gain this blessing is the most Christlike work we can do; and in doing it, we show our sonship to "his Father and our Father, — his God and our God."

Luke ix. 51. "*When the time was come.*" More exactly, *was coming*, or, as the Revised Version gives it, "When the days were well nigh come." "*Received up.*" This can mean only his being taken up into heaven after the work given him to do should be finished.

Verse 52. "*To make ready for him,*" — that is, make ready for his reception as the Messiah going up to Jerusalem. The Samaritans expected that the Messiah would come to *their* holy temple on Mt. Gerizim, and were naturally unfriendly to the Messiah of the Jews. It would have been contrary to all the rules of Eastern hospitality for the Samaritans to have declined to give a party of travellers quarters for the night. The reason why they would not receive Jesus and his friends is clearly stated in the narrative. It was "because his face was as though he would *go to Jerusalem.*" (ver. 53.)

Verse 54. "*James and John.*" In Mark iii. 14–19, is recorded the appointment of the Twelve Apostles. One of these, Simon, Jesus surnamed *Peter*, or the *Rock-man.* "And James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James he surnamed *Boanerges*, which is, *Sons of Thunder.*" The name denotes the stormy energy, fiery zeal, and intense devotion of the two brothers. "*Even as Elias did.*" The Revised Version omits this sentence because it is a doubtful reading. But there is no doubt that the two disciples had Elias, that is, Elijah, in mind when they made their proposal. The account of what Elijah did is found in the first chapter of the Second Book of Kings.

Verse 55. "*He turned and rebuked them.*" The words of this rebuke, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," and the added sentence in ver. 56, "For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," are omitted in the Revised Version, as they do not occur in many of the ancient manuscripts. Yet the rebuke of the Master is so worthy of Jesus that it is easy to see how it may have got into the text.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE Beatitude given in Matt. v. 9 is one of the three among the eight Beatitudes that refer to the *active* virtues. In a world where strife abounds, — where "man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn," — the Christian is he who tries to live peaceably with all men. The peace-making *spirit* is commended. The temper that provokes a quarrel or keeps up strife is unchristian. On the other hand, he who loves "the things that make for peace" will endeavor to be in all his doings a true follower of the "Prince of Peace." It is also to be remembered that we can make and preserve peace among one another by indirect means as well as by efforts that are specially directed to that end.

2. We may promote peace indirectly by cultivating a spirit of charitable judgment. A very little matter, if it be inflammable, will kindle a great fire. Many a fiery dispute is caused *because we carry about with us so much moral tinder* in the shape of envy, malice, and uncharitableness. Another indirect way of furthering peace is by overcoming our self-conceit. The man who thinks too highly of himself is ever ready to justify his part in any quarrel. He will not even admit that he may not be wholly in the right, that there may be some measure of justice on the other side. But the man who has the grace of true humility, who has learned through experience of his own weaknesses to think of himself soberly and with a modest judgment, will always be ready to "hear the other side," and to admit the possibility of his being in the wrong. Again: the man who habitually cherishes the spirit of forgiveness will be at peace with his fellow-men. He will hate human *sins* so strongly that his endeavor will be in the direction of putting away the offences which have arisen rather than in that of adding a fresh offence by making or continuing a quarrel.

3. But we can often be active makers of peace. Schiller, the German poet, says, "Peace is rarely denied to the peaceful." If a man who is respected for his peaceable disposition and known as one that never gets into a quarrel, endeavors, wisely and in a brotherly spirit, to keep others from quarrelling, or to reconcile those who are already at strife with one another, he rarely fails to accomplish his object. Those who get the worst of it by interposing in a quarrel are generally men whose own temper is known to be quarrelsome, or who are unwise and injudicious in the efforts that they make. Virgil, the Roman poet, gives us a beautiful word-picture in the first book of the Æneid, where he compares Neptune soothing the angry billows of the sea to a "man of weight for worth and truth" calming an angry mob: —

> "As when in tumults rise the ignoble crowd,
> Mad are their motions and their tongues are loud,
> And stones and brands in rattling volleys fly,
> And all the rustic arms that fury can supply;
> If then some grave and pious man appear,
> They hush their noise and lend a listening ear, —
> He soothes with sober words their angry mood,
> And quenches their innate desire of blood."

This "pagan" poet knew well that to be a successful peace-maker one must have a reputation for character and piety. Men who are engaged in a quarrel resent the interference of others who are themselves "men of strife."

4. Examples of this noble virtue of peace-making are sometimes found even among children. Miss Foster, in her "Watchwords for Little Soldiers," tells us of one girl whom she knew who was a blessed peace-maker as long as she lived. "She had several brothers who would often differ about something or other, and begin to talk loud and look angry. Then Nelly would come and try to make up between them. 'Oh, don't speak so loud, dear Johnny!' she would say. 'What do you want Sam to do? Can't I do it? I would n't quarrel about it.' Or, 'Never mind, Sammy; he did not mean to hurt you, I am sure. Come and let us have a good play.' Or else she would laugh so merrily at what had happened that the others could not help laughing too instead of getting into a passion." Some boys and girls have the gentle spirit and loving tact to be, as it were, the *cushions* which the

sharp corners of their playmates' tempers need to prevent hurtful contacts with each other. Thrice happy, indeed, are all such peace-makers, — happy in the possession of a peaceful spirit, happy, too, in the consciousness that they are making others happy, and happy besides in the thought that they are in some degree "imitators of God as beloved children."

5. Widely different from these "Sons of Peace" are the "Sons of Thunder." This last phrase is the name that Jesus gave to two of his apostles, James and John. It indicates the stormy force of their character, their fiery zeal, and their intense enthusiasm for the Master's cause. This vehement spirit broke out many times in the course of their discipleship. (See Luke ix. 49 and Mark x. 35–41.) Chastened by experience and purified of its baser elements by the teachings and example of Jesus, this fiery energy made James the first apostolic martyr and John the devoted apostle of love. But in the passage which we are studying in this lesson (Luke ix. 51–56) we see these two men eager to retaliate on the Samaritans their sectarian hatred of the Jews. Because the inhabitants of a village in Samaria refused to give lodging to Jesus and his disciples, James and John proposed that the offending villagers should be destroyed by fire from heaven. "It was a strange proposal to come from men who had been for years disciples of Jesus, and shows how slow the best are to learn the heavenly doctrine and practice of charity. How startling, again, to think of this same John, a year or two after the date of this savage suggestion, going down from Jerusalem and preaching the gospel of Jesus the crucified in 'many of the villages of the Samaritans,' — possibly in this very village which he desired to see destroyed!" (See the eighth chapter of Acts.)

6. These "Sons of Thunder" whose murderous suggestion Jesus rebuked have many followers still in the world. Like James and John, they "know not what manner of spirit they are of." They think they are only zealous for the right, when in reality "the flame of their zeal is mixed up with the bitter smoke of carnal passions, anger, pride, self-will." They have a sincere jealousy for the honor of some cause, some leader, some friend; but there is mingled with this the feeling of personal resentment or of party passion. In either case they are not followers of the Prince of Peace and Friend of sinners. He came to destroy these deep-seated enmities between man and man; to uproot the hateful prejudices which divide men. He was the great Reconciler and Peace-maker. Those whom his countrymen despised and hated, — "publicans and sinners," Samaritans and Gentiles, — he befriended. He showed men who were hostile to one another what was good in each, and bade them make the best of each other. He taught the grand and comprehensive truth that man, as a Son and Brother, must seek to imitate the Perfect Father and to treat all his fellow as his brethren.

7. But it must not be forgotten that "Jesus, all gentle as he was, had his thunderbolts." Was there not a stormy energy in his in rebuke of the mercenary traders who w turning God's house into a "den of thieves" Is anything rarer or nobler than his scorn o the Pharisees' scorn, his hate of their settled hates, his righteous anger at the spectacle o their pretentious piety allied to the grosses worldliness and the utter lack of brotherl love? Neither Jesus nor the disciple wh Jesus loved was the weak, sentimental, manly character that men so often associat with patience and gentleness. Theirs was th sweetness which goes with real strength is in a measure derived from it. They wer "patient by abundance, not by lack, of life tolerant, forgiving, meek, not from sup a ness but from the depth of insight and emot No one can love men who does not hate t sins which degrade men, and is not brave i his resistance to malignant wrong. The mo powerful motive we can feel to become peac makers is an intense conviction of the hat ness of all strife. As Phillips Brooks w says: "No man loves his brethren complete unless he loves the truth better than brother; and no man desires generously fo his brethren unless he desires the best thing for the best part of them, and will willingly sacrifice the poorer things which belong to th

poorer part of them to secure that loftier attainment." Only let us be sure that our zeal for "the truth" is like that of Jesus, unsoiled by personal ambitions, unstained by personal resentments.

8. The application of our lesson to our individual lives is very obvious. We must remember that *under no circumstances can the wrath of man work the righteousness of God.* When we are told to "be angry and sin not," there is implied, no doubt, an anger which is not sin. But this anger only a good man may cherish, for it is an anger that has in it no ill-will, no self-indulgence, no personal resentment, no irritation even, or contempt, — an anger that strictly keeps the law not to render evil for evil. Such holy anger is the highest attainment of a life of Christian endeavor. For the guidance of our common daily conduct, we need to cultivate the peace-making spirit, not only that we may "as far as in us lieth" live peaceably with all men, but also that we may do what we can to break down the miserable barriers of prejudice, hatred, and uncharitableness which separate man from his fellow-men. It is possible for every one of us to be in this respect more Christlike than we are at present. We can conquer more of the selfishness that breeds strife. We can try with a stronger faith and a more patient hope to overcome evil with the weapons of love and kindness. We can imbibe more of that mild, condescending, and affectionate spirit which our Master breathed till our lives like his overflow with deeds of pure self-sacrifice and constant acts of love.

9. And what is true of individuals is true also of nations. Peace among nations as well as among men is the Christian ideal. Slow indeed has been the progress of the world in this direction; but progress there has been, sure though slow. The Religion of Love has done much to limit the evils of war, to confine these evils to the belligerents themselves, and to secure the humane treatment of the wounded and of all captives. But it has done more than this. It has promoted peace by arbitration, most notably in these latter days in the famous Geneva arbitration between the United States and England; and it has made our modern world familiar with the idea of a permanent international court of appeal to which all differences among nations may be referred. There may be in the future, as there have been in the past, righteous wars of self-defence; but as the principles of Christianity permeate more deeply each "body politic" among the nations, the necessity for such wars will more and more cease. There may also be in time to come, as there have been in former times, wars wherein great principles of justice and freedom will be at stake; but more and more the triumphs of justice will be among the victories of peace; and when oppression ceases by the prevalence of brotherly love, there will no longer be any need to defend freedom by the sword. Non-resistance, as the doctrine that physical force must never be resorted to as an instrument for restraining and regulating men, is the teaching neither of Christianity nor of a sound common sense. But earnest and strenuous opposition to war as a most terrible evil is the plainest dictate of that "enthusiasm of humanity" which sees in every man a brother to be loved, and in every nation a neighbor to be served.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Blest are the *Sons of Peace*,
Whose hearts and hopes are one;
Whose kind designs to serve and please,
Through all their actions run!

WATTS.

Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war. — MILTON.

Living peaceably implies a constant, stable, and well-settled condition of being, — a continual cessation from injury and promptitude to do good offices. — BARROW.

Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace
To silence envious tongues.

SHAKSPEARE.

Speak, move, act in peace, as if you were in prayer. In truth, this is prayer. — FÉNELON.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Repeat Luke x. 5 and 6.
2. Repeat Mark iii. 17.
3. Who are peace-makers? Note on Matt. v. 9.
4. What blessing is promised them?
5. What does this mean? Note on Matt. v. 9.
6. In the narrative in Luke ix. 51–56, where are we told Jesus was going?
7. What people would not receive him?
8. Why not? Note on Luke ix. 52.
9. What did James and John then propose to do? Ver. 54.
10. Why had Jesus called these two brothers "Sons of Thunder"? Note on ver. 54.
11. What did he do when they proposed to burn the Samaritans? Ver. 55.
12. What kind of men are successful peace-makers? § 3.
13. What did Virgil write about the man who soothes an angry mob? § 3.
14. Tell about the young peace-maker described in § 4.
15. Tell the three ways in which happiness comes to such a peace-maker. See last sentence in § 4.
16. Tell something about the apostles James and John. § 5.
17. How can we all be peace-makers? § 8, last part.
18. What does Christianity teach us about war? § 9.
19. Recite the first verse in the *Golden Sayings.*

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. To what *class* of Beatitudes does Matt. v. 9 belong? § 1.
2. What spirit or temper does this Beatitude commend?
3. What is the meaning of the blessing promised to peace-makers? Note on ver. 9.
4. Narrate what is recorded in Luke ix. 51–56.
5. What are the three sentences in this passage which are rejected in the Revised Version? See Notes on verses 54, 55.
6. Why are they rejected? Notes.
7. What reasons may be given for their being found in some of the ancient manuscripts? Notes.
8. Why did Jesus name James and John "Sons of Thunder"? See note on ver. 54.
9. Why did the Samaritans refuse to receive Jesus and his friends? See note on ver. 52.
10. What is referred to in the sentence, "as Elias did," in ver. 54?
11. What was probably the purport of the rebuke that Jesus gave to James and John?
12. On what other occasions did he rebuke these two apostles? See Luke ix. 50 and Matt. xx. 22, 23.
13. How may we *indirectly* promote peace? § 2.
14. What kind of men succeed in *actively* promoting peace? § 3.
15. Give the illustration from Virgil. § 3.
16. Give the illustration from child-life in § 4.
17. What is said of James and John in § 5?
18. Who are the modern followers of the "Sons of Thunder," and what does Christianity teach such men? § 6.
19. Show how strength and sweetness were combined in the character of Jesus and in that of John. § 7.
20. What is the *personal* application of this lesson? § 8.
21. What is the Christian doctrine concerning war? § 9.
22. What effect upon war has Christianity already wrought? § 9.
23. What was the "Geneva arbitration"?
24. In what ways may we hope to see Christianity exert even a greater influence upon war in the future? § 9.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The Apostle John as a "Son of Thunder." 2. Meaning of the phrase, "*The wrath of the Lamb*," as applied to Jesus. 3. The Quaker doctrine of non-resistance. 4. Detailed effects of the influence of Christianity upon war.

LESSON IX.

SYMPATHY.

Matt. xviii. 5, 6, and xxv. 34-40.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. — Matt. xxv. 40.

THE MEANING.

Matt. xviii. 5. "*One such little child.*" Jesus had just answered the question of the disciples in ver. 1: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" by setting a child in the midst of them, and telling them that he who is most childlike, who thinks least of himself, is the greatest in God's kingdom. Then he goes on in ver. 5 to speak of the way in which he would have his followers treat all children and childlike persons, — people, that is, who are humble and unassuming, and are therefore likely to be slighted and pushed aside. Into the feelings of all such "little ones" Jesus enters by the power of his loving sympathy, and tells his disciples that in receiving them, that is, in being kind to them, they will be receiving *him*. "*In my name.*" This means that we are to receive God's "little ones" in the Christ-spirit, entering into their condition, putting ourselves, as Jesus put himself, in their place.

Verse 6. "*Offend,*" — that is, tempt to do wrong or cause to go astray. "*Millstone.*" This means the stone in the large mill that was turned by a donkey, and so was much bigger than the stones of a hand-mill. The punishment here referred to was not practised by the Jews, but they may have seen the Romans inflict it upon offenders. At all events, it represented to their minds a terrible penalty for wrong-doing.

Matt. xxv. 34. "*Blessed of my Father,*" — that is, the blessed ones who belong to the Father in the sense that they are His true children imitating His goodness. "*From the foundation of the world.*" The kingdom of blessing was always ready for those who were prepared to enter it. Read Acts x. 35.

Verse 35. "*An hungered,*" etc. The acts of mercy mentioned here are such as demand care and sympathy, and also involve the sacrifice of time, strength, rest, and comfort. We have learned in these modern times that a wise philanthropy demands of us vastly more time and thought than is required by the mere giving of alms.

Verse 40. "*Ye have done it unto me.*" One Roman poet could say: "I count nothing human alien to myself;" and another: "Not ignorant of misfortunes myself I succor the unfortunate." But Jesus gave mankind a clear and winning illustration of that divine Humanity in which we are all sons and daughters of the Most High. He teaches us not only that the heavenly blessedness is for those alone whose life on earth is inspired by active love, but also that all men have a claim upon our love because of a common sonship to the Heavenly Father. In helping *any* one of God's children we help *every* "son of man," — we then love our neighbor as our very self, for we take by a Christlike sympathy our neighbor's place.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE two Gospel passages on which this lesson is based furnish illustrations of the *Christian Duty of Sympathy*, — the duty of putting ourselves in another's place, of entering into his joys and his sorrows as if they were our own. Briefly but comprehensively has St. Paul stated this law of sympathy in the familiar words: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." (Rom. xii. 15.) We are all sons of one Father, brethren of one family. Without sympathy we could not love our neighbor as ourselves; and to be truly Christlike one must have "the mind in him which was also in Christ . . . not looking each one to his own things, but looking also at the things of others." Since therefore the duty of sympathy is so clearly set forth in Christ's teaching of the essential unity of all men in their sonship to God, sympathy may well be called the great central law of Christian conduct.

2. See, now, how this duty is taught in the first of our lesson passages (Matt. xviii. 5, 6). Jesus is teaching the apostles humility and condescension. This he does by an object-sermon. Taking a little child in his arms, he makes him his text, and tells the disciples to consider what it is that makes such a child the object of tender affection and loving interest. It is, in the first place, the child's humility, his lack of pride and pretentiousness. "Early childhood knows nothing of those distinctions of rank which are the offspring of human pride. A king's child will play without scruple with a beggar." So Jesus would have his disciples be, — lowly of heart and self-forgetting. But more than this. That little child in the arms of Jesus is a type of weakness, insignificance, and helplessness, — a representative, therefore, of that large class of our fellow-creatures who most need our pitying love, and are most deeply wounded by our contempt.

3. But that which is most striking and suggestive in the object-sermon of Jesus is not what he says about his living text, but his way of entering into the very mind and heart of childhood, of seeing and feeling things as if he himself were the little child that he held in his arms. We seem to hear him say: Nothing that is human is foreign to me. As I weep when my friends are sad, as I go to the wedding-feast and share the social mirth, so do I partake of all the experiences of my human brethren. Especially sacred to me are the needs and longings of my Father's "little ones;" of those who like this child are of low estate, helpless and dependent, yet receptive and open to all the approaches of pity and kindness. To them, in their lowliness and their heart-hunger, I bring the good tidings of the Father's love. So dear to my heart are these feeble brothers and wretched sisters that should I hear of your kindness and helpfulness to one of the very least of them I should feel as if you were pitying and befriending me.

4. The second of our lesson passages (Matt. xxv. 34–40) sets this duty of sympathy in a still clearer and stronger light. However we may understand the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, there can be no question as to its central teaching. Men will be judged, they *are* judged, not by their professions but by their actions. Charity is the real sanctity; helpfulness, true holiness. The compassionate and the merciful, — those disinterested lovers and helpers of their kind who are actuated by no ambition for fame, no desire for reward, — these are the "blessed of the Father," t heirs of his kingdom. And these brothers mercy actively sympathize, as their Master with the sufferings and the sorrows of th fellow-men. They put themselves in ev stricken brother's place, and are moved to compassion at the sight of any woe they can assuage.

5. Sympathy, then, is shown by the teachings and example of Jesus to be just what the Greek original of our English word signifies, — that is, *feeling with another*, or *sensitiveness to others' feelings*. Only we must bear in mind that Christlike sensibility to human feeling always passes quickly from emotion to sympa

thizing action. Some foregleams of this divine energy seem to light up the dark passions of the brute creation. The maternal instinct of the lioness flashes into a noble rage when her young are attacked, and the hostile assault is repelled with more ferocity than a direct attack upon herself would have provoked. In the human family we see this instinct of maternal sympathy transfigured by the higher affections of man. Her children's joys are the mother's purest pleasures, their sufferings her keenest pains. No self-devotion or self-sacrifice is too costly to gain for them release from sickness or security against wrong-doing.

6. But the sympathy which is the vital breath of the life of the home enters also into those relations of man with man that extend beyond the family. To illustrate by a story: A city missionary in Chicago relates the following incident. He was one day called to visit a poor widow whose only child, a daughter of twelve, had been drowned in the lake. Taking with him his twelve-year-old daughter, he went to the widow's desolate home, and spoke and prayed with her in words of well-meant sympathy. "Father," abruptly asked the missionary's daughter as they were walking homeward, "you love me, do you not?" "Very dearly, my daughter." "Suppose, father," she continued, "you should come home some day and be told that *I* had been drowned in the lake,—would n't you feel badly?" "Certainly I should, but why do you ask me these strange questions?" "Because, papa, I don't think you did feel quite like that when you were talking and praying with that poor woman whose daughter was drowned." His child's gentle rebuke touched the minister's heart, and returning to the widow's house, he tried to put himself in her place and to make her sorrow his own. Then talking and praying as if the little girl who had been drowned in the lake were indeed his own beloved daughter, he left with the heart-broken mother something of that real comfort which words of genuine, Christlike sympathy always give.

7. Are we, then, it may be asked, to think of Jesus every time we sympathize with the sorrowful or the suffering, and perhaps take added credit to ourselves from the thought that our kind act to another was also done to him? No such literal association of his name with our deeds of love is required of us. What is required is that like him, and in his pure spirit of brotherly sympathy, we become sensitive to our brother's woes, feel them as if they were our own, and give them prompt relief. In his noble poem, "The Vision of Sir Launfal," Lowell has finely set forth this relation of the sympathetic soul to the Man of Sorrows. In the "grewsome leper" the Knight of the Holy Grail beholds "an *image* of him who died on the tree;" and whoever in the love of man "bestows *himself* with his alms" does the deed of love to the Son of Man whether he thinks of him or not. The same thought is also beautifully expressed in the poem entitled "Jesus' Seat," wherein the legend is told of the seat at the convent table which is always left for the "Lord Jesus." One evening a poor wandering child strays into the hall and takes the "Lord's seat." The kind-hearted "brothers" give a generous supper to the hungry waif, when, lo! in his place "Lord Jesus" himself is seen. *In feeding the hungry child they had fed their Lord.*

8. Space is lacking to consider the duty, too frequently neglected, of sympathizing with our fellow-men in their prosperity and successes. Sympathize with the man who has gained riches or place or renown, and you will do much to keep him from being selfish and conceited. The "love that is kind" is always "without envy" as well. And, finally, let it be borne in mind that much can be done in the way of *cultivating* sympathy. By effort and self-discipline we can supply a native lack of sympathetic power. We can cultivate the *moral imagination.* The great dramatists, like Shakspeare, and the great novelists, also, may aid us in this culture, and help us to put ourselves in another's place. But "a more excellent way" is to learn of Jesus, of his life as well as his teachings. Catching the tune from him who was so sensitive to human sufferings that he seemed to bear the woes, and to compassionate the sins, of the "whole world," we shall be able to accord thereto the strings of our own inward being, and add new melodies to that music which is "the gladness of the world."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Men were born for the sake of men, that each should assist the others. — CICERO.

We are members of one great body. — SENECA.

By attention and exercise sympathy may be improved in every man. — BEATTIE.

A heart *at leisure from itself*
To soothe and sympathize.
MISS WARING.

A friend shares my sorrow and makes it but a moiety, but he swells my joy and makes it double. — JEREMY TAYLOR.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. — ROM. xii. 15.

Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. — 1 COR. xii. 26.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. In verses 1–3 of Matt. xviii., what does Jesus do, and what does he say? See the first note, and read the verses referred to.
2. What does he say in ver. 5?
3. What did he mean by "*in my name*"? Note.
4. Recite ver. 6.
5. What does "offend" mean in this verse? Note.
6. Tell something about the "millstone" and the punishment that is here spoken of. Note.
7. What Christian *duty* is taught us in this lesson? § 1.
8. How did St. Paul state this duty? § 1.
9. Who do you think are the "little ones" that Jesus speaks about in ver. 6? § 2, last part.
10. Recite Matt. xxv. 34.
11. What is meant by "*from the foundation* of the world"? Note to ver. 34.
12. Tell the *six* kinds of good deeds that are mentioned in verses 35, 36.
13. What is meant by "*ye have done it unto me*" in ver. 40? § 7.
14. Tell something about the "Vision Sir Launfal." § 7.
15. Tell the story about "Jesus' Seat." § 7.
16. Tell the story given in § 6.
17. Can you think of any way in which you can show sympathy to your companions?
18. Recite the *Golden Text.*
19. Recite one of the *Golden Sayings.*

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What great Christian duty is taught in this lesson?
2. State this duty in St. Paul's words. § 1.
3. In Matt. xviii. 1–6, what kind of training is Jesus giving to his disciples? § 2.
4. How does he give it? § 2.
5. What are the *two* traits of childhood that he has in mind? § 2.
6. Of what large class of people is the "little child" a type? § 2.
7. How would Jesus have us treat such people? § 3 and note to ver. 5.
8. What is the meaning of ver. 6? Note.
9. What parable is given us in Matt. xxv. 31–46?
10. Explain ver. 34. Note.
11. What is the nature of the acts of mercy enumerated in verses 35, 36? Note on ver. 35.
12. What does "*ye have done it unto me*" in ver. 40 mean? Note on ver. 40.
13. State more at length the meaning of this sentence. § 7.
14. Give the legends of "Sir Launfal" and "Jesus' Seat," and show how they illustrate the teaching of ver. 40.
15. What is the central teaching of the parable of the Sheep and the Goats? § 4.
16. Define sympathy, and illustrate its manifestations among animals and in the home. § 5.
17. Relate the story given in § 6.
18. How may we sympathize with men in their successes, and what effect upon them has such sympathy have? § 8.
19. How may we *cultivate* sympathy? § 8.
20. What is the "moral imagination"?
21. What is the "more excellent way" mentioned in the closing part of § 8?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1 The parable of the Sheep and the Goats. 2. Examples of the sympathy of Jesus. 3. The imagination as an aid to sympathy. 4. Imperfect sympathies, and how they may be overcome.

LESSON X.

LOVE TO ENEMIES.

Matt. v. 43–48.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Love your enemies.—Matt. v. 44.

THE MEANING.

Verse 43. The first half of the saying in this verse is from Lev. xix. 18: "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" Nothing in this law encouraged hatred of one's enemies. The clause "*and hate thine enemy,*" was an invention of the Rabbis or later Jewish teachers.

Verse 44. "*Love your enemies.*" By enemies is here meant our *personal* foes; those who hate and injure us, or who curse and persecute us. The Revised Version omits the words: "*Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you;*" but they are found in the parallel passage in the Gospel of Luke (vi. 28). "*Pray for them,*" etc. Prayer for another is the highest utterance of our love to him. When we can pray for one who hates us, we show by so doing that we feel no personal resentment, and are willing to act toward him as God would have us act.

Verse 45. "*Children of your Father who is in heaven.*" Read Eph. v. 1. We *are* God's children, and man's sonship to the Heavenly Father is the leading idea in the teachings of Jesus (compare Lesson I.) But here we are told that by doing good to those who hate us, we shall nobly illustrate our place as sons in the divine family. "*For he maketh his sun,*" etc. God loves His enemies. Evil and unjust men are punished for their sins; but God does not take from them the sunshine or the rain, nor does He shut them out from His all-embracing love, of which the sun and the rain-cloud are the images. So must we act towards our enemies. As St. Paul teaches us: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink" (Rom. xii. 20). More even than this: we are to strive to overcome the evil that is in his actions by the good we can do to him, by our forbearance, our long-suffering, our gentle words, and our kind deeds.

Verse 46. "*The publicans.*" These were the men whom the Romans employed to collect the taxes of the Jews. They were often exacting and dishonest. Jesus refers to them here to remind his hearers that even men who were so low down morally as these "publicans" were, loved those who loved them. His disciples are to go far beyond this, and love others without asking or expecting a return of their love.

Verse 47. "*Publicans.*" The Revised Version gives the correct reading, "*Gentiles,*"—that is, the heathen, whom the Jews hated and despised as much as they did the publicans.

Verse 48. "*Perfect.*" That is, perfect in your love to others. God's love is to be the pattern of our love,—a love that embraces not only the good and the grateful, but the evil and the unthankful. As a drop of water reflects the whole sky, so, in a pure, loving soul, there may be a perfect image of the Heavenly Father's love.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE command to love our enemies is sometimes regarded as one of the "hard sayings" of the Gospels. Men ask, "Is not he who is hostile to us placed in a relation with which it is difficult for us to associate such a holy feeling as love? Has the verb to love an imperative mood, as if loving could be done to order? Can we, in short, love anything or anybody that is not lovable?" The answer to these questions is, that our enemy is something more and something other than a mere enemy. He is still "a man and a brother." God's love flows forth to sinful men, not because they are sinners, but because, "though evil," they are yet His children. In the same way we can love our fellow-men on the simple ground of their being men. We can love the man in every human being. Our affection can flow forth to that Divine Humanity which makes us all sons and daughters of the Most High.

2. The Christian duty of loving our enemies is implied in the teachings of all the preceding lessons of this course. It is based on the leading idea of Jesus set forth in Lesson I., that of the sonship to God of every human being. It finds a clear illustration in the parable of the Good Samaritan, wherein Jesus extends the word neighbor to include all men, even those who hate us. The Golden Rule of Christian Justice, if perfectly obeyed, would prevent all mortal feuds. In judging our enemies, a righteous judgment would restrain us from "casting the first stone" at a foe of whose sins we are often guilty ourselves, and need for these sins the same forgiveness. How rarely, too, would personal enmities arise if we kept our souls free from anger and contempt; if we cultivated a forbearing spirit, and were always ready to be "reconciled to our brother." Finally, to be ever ready to forgive, "not till seven times, but till seventy times seven;" to "live, so far as in us lieth, peaceably with all men;" and to cherish, under all circumstances and towards all our fellow-men, a sympathizing spirit, — would not this be to have the very feeling of love for the unlovely which we are so apt to think of as unnatural and hard to attain?

3. Loving one's enemies is only unnatural to those who have put off their true nature, who have divested themselves of that divine humanity which is "the life of God in the soul of man," and who must now "put on the new man which, *after God*, is created in righteousness and true holiness." And a similar answer must be given to those who say that this command to love one's enemies is far too fine for common use, and that obedience thereto would be altogether contrary to the habits and tempers of ordinary men. "Common use" means simply that which is *somewhere* in common use; but ever since Christendom began there have always been men who have rendered blessing for cursing, and have been in every respect true followers of the Prince of Peace; men "who in bodily weakness and in defiance of the physically strong showed forth the loving-kindness which they said was his." When, amid the cruelties that were rife in the old Roman world, fair-minded pagans were forced to exclaim: "See how those Christians love one another," they said this to the praise of the meek followers of Jesus, — not as if they looked upon the early disciples as a band of unpractical fanatics. And to-day, th Christendom still sadly needs to be Chri ized, there is no Christian neighborhood, now ever far as a community it may fall below ideal of a true brotherhood, in which the of loving one's enemies is not kept by unselfisn and forgiving souls.

4. Is not this proof enough that we *can* l : our enemies if we will, and that love has m power over men to change their hearts t any other influence man can wield? What man *has* done when acting from the motive that in loving his enemies he has reflected the divine treatment of his own transgressions, that man *may* do. Says Dr. Walker: "Men are beginning to find out what is so clearly laid down as being at the bottom of all genuine Christian influence. They are also beginning to reap the fruit of this discovery in the

wonderful success attending those attempts to reclaim the erring and lift up the fallen where men trust wholly to the accents of human sympathy, speaking in the name of him who loved us, and gave himself for us. *Moral miracles might still be wrought if men would only have faith in that ever-open and ever-flowing source of divine power.*" How even a child may work such "moral miracles" in conquering his enemies, is well illustrated in Miss Foster's story in the ninth chapter of her "Watchwords for Little Soldiers; or, Stories on Bible Texts."

5. To those who may be influenced in this matter by motives of a less exalted character, these words of Dean Stanley are commended: "It was a wise maxim of ancient military tactics, '*Always make a silver bridge for a flying enemy.*' It is no less a maxim of Christian wisdom and charity. Make silver bridges for those who seek to retrieve their errors, their mistakes, their wrongs. It was an ancient maxim, too, of worldly prudence: '*Look on your best friends with the thought that they may one day become your worst enemies.*' It is for us to reverse this maxim, and rather say: 'Look on your worst enemies with the thought that they may one day become your best friends.'"

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

If thou wouldst imitate God, do good even to the unthankful; for the sun rises even on the wicked, and the seas are open to pirates. — SENECA.

It is the privilege of human nature above brutes to love those that disoblige us. — MARCUS ANTONINUS.

The cure for all the ills and wrongs, the cares, the sorrows, and the crimes of humanity, all lie in that one word, "love." — LYDIA MARIA CHILD.

Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

Love is the hardest lesson in Christianity; but for that reason it should be most our care to learn it. — WILLIAM PENN.

If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. — ROM. xii. 20.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Recite ver. 43.
2. Where in the Old Testament is the first half of this saying found? Note.
3. Who added the words, "*and hate thine enemy*"?
4. Who are meant by "*enemies*" in ver. 44? Note.
5. What words in ver. 44 are omitted in the Revised Version? Note.
6. Why are we told to "*pray* for them that despitefully use you"?
7. Recite Eph. v. 1.
8. What is meant in ver. 45 by the words: "*That ye may be the children*," etc.? Note.
9. What *reason* for loving enemies is given in ver. 45? Note.
10. Recite Rom. xii. 20.
11. Who were the "*publicans*"? Note on ver. 46.
12. Why does Jesus refer to them here? Note.
13. What is the correct reading in place of "*publicans*" in ver. 47, and what does it mean? Note.
14. What is the meaning of the command, "*Be ye perfect*," in ver. 48? Note.
15. What is the image of God's love in a loving soul compared to in this Note?
16. What teachings of Jesus have you learned in the preceding nine lessons, which, if obeyed, would lead us to love our enemies? [The teacher may read and explain § 2 and then ask questions on the different lessons.]
17. How can we love people who are not lovable? § 1.
18. In the verses of this lesson, what *motive* for loving our enemies is given us, — that is, *why* should we love them?
19. Give the two ancient maxims, and the two Christian maxims which are stated in § 5, and explain their meaning.
20. Recite the *fourth Golden Saying* ("Touched by a loving heart," &c.).

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Explain the two parts of the saying in ver. 43. Note.
2. What omissions from ver. 44 are made in the Revised Version? Note.
3. Are these omitted sentences found in either Mark or Luke, and if so, where? Note.
4. How is *prayer* an expression of our love to others? Note on ver. 44.
5. Explain the expression in ver. 45: "*That ye may be the children,*" etc. Note on ver. 45. Compare also ver. 9 of this chapter, and Eph. v. 1.
6. What is the force of the reason given for loving enemies in the sentence, "*For he maketh his sun,*" etc.?
7. What saying of a "pagan" philosopher is strikingly like these words of Jesus? See the first of the *Golden Sayings*.
8. What does St. Paul say about the Christian way of treating enemies? Rom. xii. 20.
9. Have Christians actually treated their personal enemies in this way? State the substance of § 3.
10. Why did Jesus refer, in ver. 46, to the "*publicans*"? Note.
11. Explain ver. 47. Note.
12. Explain ver. 48. Note.
13. How can we love those who are not lovable? § 1.
14. Show how the command to love our enemies is implied in the central teaching of each of the nine preceding lessons. § 2.
15. What *motive* for loving enemies is gi in the quotation from Dean Stanley in § 5.
16. What is the *Christian motive* for loving one's enemies?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Love to enemies as a *distinctively* Christian virtue. [Read chapters 22 and 23 in "Ecce Homo."] 2. The benevolence of God as seen in the natural world. 3. Hatred of all but Jews as a characteristic of the ancient Jewish people.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LESSONS I.-X.

FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Relate the parable of the Prodigal Son.
2. What classes of people do the prodigal and the elder brother represent?
3. What practical lesson is taught us in the last part of this parable?
4. Tell the parable of the Good Samaritan.
5. Tell the story given in Lesson II. § 1, and show how the commandment of Jesus was "new."
6. How can *we* now "go and do" like the Good Samaritan?
7. Repeat the whole verse that contains the Golden Rule.
8. What is meant in that verse by "*the law and the prophets*"?
9. Tell the two "supposes" in Lesson III. § 7, and show what they teach about justice and generosity.
10. Explain the saying of Jesus about the "mote" and the "beam."
11. Tell the story of Ruth given in Lesson IV. § 7.
12. Tell the story of John Newton, the preacher, given in the same lesson.
13. What did Jesus mean when, in Matt. v. 22, he said the angry man was "*in danger of the judgment*"?
14. What sin did Jesus say would be punished by the "*Gehenna of fire*"?
15. What *was* the "Gehenna of fire," and how was it connected with punishment?
16. Tell something about the way in which the Jews "worshipped in their Temple."
17. What did the old Jewish law, "*an eye for an eye*," mean?
18. What *principle* is taught in the command in Matt. v. 38 to "*Resist not the evil-doer*"?
19. What conversation on forgiveness between Peter and Jesus is related in Matt. xviii. 21, 22?
20. What story or "parable" did Jesus then relate?
21. Tell the stories given in Lesson VII. §§ 3 and 4, and show how they illustrate the forgiveness of injuries.
22. Who were called in Mark iii. 17, "*Sons of Thunder*," and why were they so called?
23. What is the Beatitude about "*peacemakers*"?
24. How may we "live peaceably with all men"?
25. How did St. Paul state the Christian duty of sympathy?
26. What does the *Golden Text* of Lesson IX. mean?
27. Tell something about the "Vision of Sir Launfal" and the story of "Jesus' Seat."
28. How did St. Paul say we should treat our enemies?
29. What commandment did Jesus give about this?
30. What *motive* for loving our enemies did Jesus place before us?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What is the key-note to all the teachings of Jesus?
2. Give the *substance* of the parable of the Prodigal Son.
3. Explain the teachings of this parable, especially the lesson taught in the last part of it.
4. Tell the story of the Good Samaritan.
5. How does the merciful act of this Good Samaritan illustrate the "genius of true love to others"?
6. When do *we* to-day act in the spirit of the "*Priest*" and the "*Levite*"?
7. When Jesus says, in Matt. vii. 9, 10, that no human father would give his child a stone for bread, what does he teach about human nature?
8. How does the Golden Rule differ from

similar sayings (given in Lesson III.) by Hillel, Isocrates, and Confucius?

9. What great truth concerning human nature is implied in the Golden Rule? See § 8 of Lesson III.

10. Show how it is necessary for us to "judge" the deeds of our fellow-men.

11. What kind of faults in others are men very apt to blame?

12. In what way may we cure ourselves of the "*judging spirit*"?

13. What method did Jesus use to teach the hatefulness of the sins of anger, derision, and contempt?

14. Explain the "judgment" in Matt. v. 22, and the "Sanhedrin."

15. What does the "Gehenna of fire" mean, and of what was it the symbol?

16. Give an account of the Jewish Temple-worship.

17. How had the Scribes perverted the meaning of the old law, "*an eye for an eye*," etc.?

18. How can we obey the *spirit* of the command, "*Resist not the evil-doer*"?

19. Explain the meaning of the question that Peter asked Jesus about forgiveness, and the significance of the reply of Jesus.

20. Explain the double meaning of the word "*forgive*."

21. What elements of character enter into the forgiving spirit?

22. On what occasion did Jesus rebuke James and John for their belligerent spirit?

23. How may we indirectly promote peace in our daily lives?

24. What is the Christian doctrine concerning war, and what effect has Christianity had upon war?

25. Of what class of people is Jesus speaking in Matt. xviii. 5 and 6, and how would he have us treat them?

26. What is the central teaching of the parable of the Sheep and the Goats?

27. How may we *cultivate* sympathy?

28. Compare what Seneca said about "good to the unthankful" with the saying of Jesus about loving one's enemies.

29. How *can* we love our enemies?

30. What is meant by the command in Matt. v. 48 to "*be perfect*"?

Note. — A judicious selection from these Review Questions might be used for a *written* examination.

LESSON XI.

AGAINST EVIL-SPEAKING.

Matt. xii. 34-37.

GOLDEN TEXT.—By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.—Matt. xii. 37.

THE MEANING.

Verse 34. "*Generation of vipers.*" Better, as in the Revised Version, "*offspring* of vipers." John the Baptist used the same words in speaking of the Pharisees. Read Matt. iii. 7. "*The abundance of the heart.*" The word translated *abundance* means in this place the superabundance,—that is, what is left over. Words are the *overflow* of the heart.

Verse 35. "*Good treasure.*" The Revised Version gives the correct reading, which is "out of his good treasure," and not "out of the good treasure of his heart." In Matt. ii. 12, the "treasure" was the casket in which were kept the jewels that the wise men brought. Here, as in chap. xiii. 52, the treasure is the storehouse in which treasures or precious things are laid up. The meaning is that our hearts are storerooms in which are kept our thoughts and feelings and desires. When we put these into words it is as if we brought forth the good or evil that we have stored up within.

Verse 36. The "*idle word*" is the word that is thoughtlessly or heedlessly spoken, but which betrays the character of the speaker. The general principle which Jesus here states was suggested by a special occasion,—namely, that of the taunting remark of the Pharisees, "He casteth out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons." In affirming this doctrine of words he makes it include not only such evil and malicious speech as the taunt of the Pharisees, but all useless words,—all words *that men have no business to say.* "*Give account thereof;*" that is, even our random speech, our "idle" words, enter into the great total which decides the divine estimate of our character. "*Day of judgment.*" It is neither implied here nor is it declared elsewhere in the teachings of Jesus that there will be one general judgment-day for all mankind. For each human being the day of judgment will come when he passes to a higher stage of existence.

Verse 37. "*Justified,*"—that is, shown or declared to be just or righteous,—while "condemned" means the exact opposite of this. We are taught in the New Testament that a man is justified by his faith and by his works, and, in this passage, by his words. All three—faith, works, words—go to make up a man's character, and so reveal what he really is. Faith—which implies both trust and love—is the root of character; words are its spontaneous manifestation, and works, its lasting results.

THE TEACHING.

1. OUR lesson-passage opens with an exclamation that has a strange sound, coming from one who was "meek and lowly of heart." *Offspring of vipers!* Thus did Jesus characterize the bigoted and evil-minded Pharisees. And then he straightway proceeds to lay down the universal rule that by a man's *words* shall he be justified or condemned. What, then, are

we to think of the Master's own words, addressed to the Pharisees? Do they mar the otherwise flawless beauty of his character? Did he, who elsewhere condemned so strongly the spirit of contempt, himself indulge in scornful speech? Not so do the fairest interpreters explain his language. "Christ's words to the Pharisees," says Rev. Stopford Brooke, "have all the marks of indignation and none of the marks of anger." Without such indignation at evil there is no beauty in character. "Indignation is led by reason, and is the servant of justice. It waits before it speaks. Its denunciation is calm, deliberate, and full; the words are weighed so as to be scrupulously just." Theodore Parker, also, a man not biassed in his judgment here, says of Jesus and the Pharisees: "The case called for vigorous treatment. It is not with honeyed words, neither then nor now, that great sins are to be exposed. It was not hatred, personal indignation, but love of men, which lit that burning zeal."

2. To these clear statements it may be added that the Pharisees whom Jesus characterized as the "offspring of vipers" had been guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. They had called good evil, and had wilfully closed their minds against the plainest evidence of Jesus' love to the sinful and the unfortunate. His merciful act of healing the dumb man they had ascribed to his being in league with the "Prince of Demons." Their abusive speech showed that their minds were out of sympathy with goodness and mercy; that they belonged to that large class of people who assign bad motives to kind deeds, and like to put the worst construction on whatever they see or hear of the actions of their fellow-men. Their words had the venom of vipers, and could have come only from venomous hearts. Out of the abundance of an evil mind they had spoken, and by its poisonous fruits, in bitter and unjust words, the tree of their character had made itself known.

3. The occasion, therefore, gave Jesus his opportunity to declare his doctrine of words, and to show how far-reaching in their results all human utterances necessarily are. "Words," it has been well said, "are the chief revealers of character; for character is a secret spring, the waters of which become visible as they flow forth in rills of words and brooks of phrases and rivers of sentences." Or, as the same thought has been otherwise illustrated: "A man's character is the inscription which his habits have engraved on him. *His words translate that inscription, — they characterize him.*" Hypocrisy may sometimes give to words a false ring, and we need to observe a man's general behavior, his habitual conduct, in order to know what sort of a man he is; yet, in the main, it is by his words that he is justified, — that is, judged to be right at heart, — or is condemned, — that is, judged to be evil-minded.

4. It is instructive to read in this co tion what the Apostle James has said ot fearful power of the tongue:

"For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. Now, if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also. Behold, the ships also, though they are so great, and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very sr rudder whither the impulse of the steersman willeth. So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind. But the tongue can no man tame: it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? Can a fig-tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? Neither can salt water yield sweet." — JAMES iii. 2–12.

5. The sources of evil-speaking are not hard to find. Many of our "idle words" c from sheer thoughtlessness. This is specially the case with *gossip*.

Society, it is true, has a right to protect itself against bad men; and it is sometimes necessary for us to discuss the characters of

our neighbors in order that we may know by whom we are surrounded. But gossip very rarely is a fair discussion, the sole end of which is truth, and the motive love. Envy and malice, ill-will and jealousy, and a whole brood of baser feelings too often crowd out all better motives, and give the tone and bias to our remarks. The purest character is most easily defiled in the turbid current of gossip, even as the whitest lily is most easily smirched in a filthy stream. Let us bate no jot of our hatred of all wrong-doing; but let us first be sure that a wrong has been done. Let us at least bring Christian conduct up to the standard of pagan law, and count every man innocent until he is found guilty. But as Christians, we are bound to go a step higher, to the charity that "thinks no evil," that "believes all things" for the best and to the advantage of one's neighbor, that covers a multitude of real defects, and that abstains still more from spreading false and imaginary charges.

6. Let us illustrate for the scholars this vice of tale-bearing. John comes running into the house to tell his mother that Paul has been picking grapes from the vines which they had both been forbidden to touch. What is it that causes his eyes to sparkle, and gives a tone of satisfaction to his voice? Does he think his mother will love him the more because she learns that Paul has done wrong? Will it give him pleasure to have Paul punished? Is it anything but a mean and unlovely feeling on John's part that has prompted him to tell about his brother?

Or Clara, as she walks home from school with Louise, her "dearest friend," repeats to her what another schoolmate has said about her. "It 's real mean," she adds; quite forgetting that only a little while before she had been listening, and by her silence then assenting, to it all. Clara has forgotten also, we may be sure, to remind Louise of the many good and kind things which the same schoolmate had at other times said of her. And so, by her "idle words," she breaks up a friendship and makes two hearts sad.

7. A worse form of evil-speaking is *slander;* and a good deal of that idle talk about our neighbors, which few of us wholly abstain from, runs very close upon this vice of slandering. We may indeed stop short of open defamation of the character of another, and yet, judged by the spirit of our words and the temper of our hearts, we may have been guilty of the same crime. Giving currency to unfounded reports, repeating unproved insinuations, the —

> "Pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
> As, *Well, well, we know* . . .
> Or such ambiguous giving-out," —

all this is slander in the germ, and before we are aware, will spring up into a poisonous growth of calumny and detraction. *The seed of slander is idle gossip;* and whoever in any community fosters and encourages this foolish tattling of other men's actions, helps to make slandering an easy vice.

8. What is the remedy for this sin of evil-speaking? Jesus tells us that good fruit can come only from a good tree. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." We must see to it, then, that the heart is right. The Hebrew Psalmist may here be our teacher, at least so far as to tell us what we are *not* to do. We are not to "walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful." (Psalms i.) He who keeps away from these things will indeed be like a good tree, even a tree that is planted by the streams of water and bringeth forth good fruit in its season. The sins of *contempt* and of the *judging spirit* — those prolific sources of evil-speaking — have been fully treated in Lessons IV. and V. of the present series. But Christianity utters a higher word than the ancient precept, "Cease to do evil." It says that the follower of Christ should let his speech "be always with grace," and bids him keep ever in mind "the things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report." He who is filled with the spirit of Jesus will "gently scan his brother man," and his speech will be full of gentleness. He will speak words of kindness and sympathy, of cheery encouragement and generous commendation. He will try to put himself in another's place, and speak as he would be spoken of, thinking rather of his own proneness to go astray than of the failures and shortcomings of those around him.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

We should be as careful of our words as of our actions, and as far from speaking ill as from doing ill. — CICERO.

Words are the voice of the heart. — CONFUCIUS.

Words are the wings of action. — LAVATER.

Pleasant words are as honey from the comb, sweet to the soul. — PROVERBS.

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in baskets of silver. — PROVERBS.

We believe in human kindness
Large amid the sons of men,
Nobler far in willing blindness
Than in censure's keenest ken.
"GOOD WORDS."

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Repeat the last clause of verse 34.
2. Give the meaning of it as you understand it.
3. What is meant by the "abundance" and the "treasure" of the heart? Notes on verses 34, 35.
4. What are "idle words"? Note on ver. 36.
5. What is said about our being judged by our words? Ver. 37 and § 3, last three lines.
6. What three things are we taught, in the New Testament, go to make up a man's character? Note on ver. 37.
7. What is the meaning of faith here? ANS. *A belief in God, which is one way of saying a belief in goodness. If we really believe in goodness, we shall want to do good, and our words will show what our disposition is.*
8. What do we see in Nature that corresponds to these three, — faith, works, and words? ANS. *A living, fruit-bearing tree. Faith is like the roots of the tree; words like the leaves and blossoms; works like the fruit.*
9. What does the Apostle James call the tongue? James iii. 6.
10. What do you think he meant by that?
11. Tell the story of John. § 6.
12. What do you think of his conduct?
13. Give the story of Clara. § 6.
14. What can we do to keep our speech always kind? See Phil. iv. 8.
15. Recite the two Golden Sayings from Proverbs.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Repeat Matt. xii. 34–37 from the Revised Version.
2. Give an account of the events which called forth these words. Matt. xii. and § 3.
3. What is the true meaning of the word here translated "abundance"? Note on ver. 34.
4. What is meant by the "Day of Judgment"?
5. In what sense is every day a day of judgment?
6. Explain Christ's use of the words, "Offspring of vipers!" §§ 1, 2.
7. What other instances do the Gospels give of his righteous indignation? See Matt. xxiii. 13–36 and John ii. 15.
8. Give the substance of the verses here quoted from James. § 4.
9. What similar figures of speech do we find applied to the tongue in the Old Testament? See Psalms lxiv. 3 and Prov. x. 20.
10. What harm is done by gossip? § 5.
11. Give reasons why a love of gossip is a low taste.
12. State the difference between gossip and slander, and how one can easily become the other. § 7.
13. What evil feelings does it encourage?
14. Why should we be charitable towards the short-comings of others?
15. To whom does judgment belong?
16. Repeat the Golden Text, and state what is its clear and certain teaching. § 3.
17. What law against gossipers is recorded in the Old Testament? See Leviticus xix. 16.
18. What is meant by the last two lines of the last Golden Saying?
19. What are some of the ways by means of which we may keep ourselves from evil-speaking? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Language, as raising man above the brute. 2. Why gossip so easily becomes "evil report." 3. How far is it just to class gossipers with thieves and murderers, as is done in 1 Peter iv. 15?

LESSON XII.

OATH-TAKING AND TRUTH-TELLING.

Matt. v. 33–37.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Let your speech be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of evil.—Matt. v. 37. [Revised Version, with Margin.]

THE MEANING.

Verse 33. "*By them of old time.*" The correct rendering is, "*to* them of old time." (See note on ver. 21 in Lesson V.) "*Forswear thyself,*" — that is, swear falsely. This Saxon word *forswear* has the same meaning as the word *perjure*, which is derived from the Latin. Perjury, or forswearing one's self, is the crime of taking a false oath. The statutes of the Old Testament that are referred to in this verse are found in Exod. xx. 7, Lev. xix. 12, Numb. xxx. 2, and Deut. xxiii. 21. In teaching these laws the Scribes had told the Jews that they might use any kind of an oath if the name of God was not expressly mentioned in it. As the result of such teaching, profanity became a common vice among the people. "Swearing was almost as natural as breathing." Read about Peter's cursing in Mark xiv. 71.

Verse 34. "*Swear not at all.*" This verse, in connection with ver. 37, teaches that in a true state of society, from which evil has been driven out, a man's word will be as good as a vow, and the simple Yes or No as decisive as an oath taken in court. But we learn from the general method of Christ's teaching, as well as from his own example and that of his Apostles, that he does not here forbid all oath-taking. He is condemning the wretched sophistry of the Jewish Scribes referred to in the note on ver. 33. (See also James v. 12.)

"*Neither by heaven,*" etc. Further explanations of the meaning of this verse and of the two following will be given in the next lesson, which will treat of profanity.

Verse 37. "*Your communication,*"— that is, "your *speech,*" as the Revised Version gives it. "Yea . . . Nay." In our English speech Yea and Nay are simply solemn forms of Yes and No. But what is meant by the command in this verse is: Let your Yes always mean Yes, and your No, No. If you add an oath to strengthen your language, it implies that you are not habitually truthful, and that you fear that others will not believe you. In this indirect way Jesus teaches the duty of truth-telling even more emphatically than if he had said, Thou shalt not lie.

THE TEACHING.

1. In that part of the Sermon on the Mount from which our lesson is taken, Jesus is giving a special instance under a general rule. The general rule is that in the new kingdom the old law will not be destroyed, but will be fulfilled. Now, the old law forbade taking God's name in vain (Exod. xx. 7). If the spirit of that prohibition were heeded, men would not "swear at all." But the popular teachers among the Jews said that the law forbade only such oaths as expressly mentioned the name of Deity. Thus they upheld the letter of the law, while by their false reasonings and word-juggleries they made its spirit of no effect. Against the sophistical teaching of these men, Jesus opposed his simple doctrine of oaths, — reaffirming the ancient commandment, but insisting upon obedience to its inner spirit rather than to its mere letter.

2. But, it will be asked, if we take Jesus at his word, is it not wrong for a witness in court to take the oath which our laws require? We may find a partial answer to this question in the example of the Teacher himself, and in

that of his first Apostles. Certainly the reply of Jesus to Caiaphas at the most solemn crisis of his public ministry was in the nature of a judicial oath. "*I adjure thee by the living* God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the son of God." Jesus said, "*Thou hast said;*" that is, "I am the Christ, and this I assert 'by the living God'" (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64). On several occasions also we find St. Paul making affirmations that were virtual oaths. (See Rom. i. 9, ix. 1; 2 Cor. i. 23; Gal. 1. 20.) Yet the objections urged by Quakers and others against legal oath-taking deserve consideration. Men draw the inference that if they have to swear in court in order to be believed, they need not speak the truth when they are not under oath. Moreover, many witnesses give false evidence even when they have taken the most solemn oath to speak the truth; and so another danger to public morals arises from this unpunished perjury. The privilege of substituting an affirmation for the required oath has been granted not only to members of those religious sects that object to oaths, but also to other persons who cannot conscientiously take the oath. On the other hand, legal oaths induce many witnesses to give evidence truthfully, and it may be a long time yet before public opinion will be prepared for their entire abolition.

3. Our next lesson will treat of that too common use of oaths which we call profanity. But in Christ's Doctrine of Words, another most important teaching is implied, which demands attention. This is the *Duty of Truth-telling*. Why should we speak the truth? Because, in the first place, the common pursuits of life cannot be carried on unless men are truthful. When untruthful words are used, business life is corrupted. Indeed, the fact that in spite of false statements and broken promises the business of the world goes on day by day without serious break or interruption, shows that honesty and not falsehood, truthfulness and not hypocrisy, are the rules that prevail in trade and commerce. The man, therefore, who tells or acts a lie in his business does that which weakens the body of which he is a member, and unsettles the relations which hold the business world together.

4. Lying works an equal injury to society. Emerson says: "The delight in good company, . . . the satisfactions of a society in which every member *returns a true echo*, double the value of life." But these noble satisfactions cannot be enjoyed by people who are untruthful. A social circle in which evasions of the truth, heartless civilities, misleading innuendoes, and false flatteries abound, is like an apple that has a fair outside but is rotten within.

5. The story of Christie, so admirably told in Rev. H. N. Brown's "Sunday Stories," well illustrates the social value of truthful speech. Christie either cannot or will not tell the truth. "The truth?" she says to herself; "why should everybody make such a ado about the truth? What's the good of it? Besides, whose business is it what I do with my tongue? I'll find some place where people mind their own affairs and leave me to talk as I please."

So Christie sets out on a journey to find this better country. By and by she comes to a place which she thinks will exactly suit her. Nobody asked her whether she spoke the truth in her conversation, or seemed shocked or grieved if she actually told a falsehood. But it was not very long before she found out that people were telling lies about herself. They would promise her things which they never gave her, and more than once she got a whipping for things she had not done. So the place that she thought would be so pleasant to live in, because she would be free to say whatever she liked, turned out to be a worse country than her own. No one believed in her, and she could believe in nobody. Everybody was quarrelling with everybody else and love and kindness were unknown. Glad enough poor Christie was to get back once more among people who were truthful; "and there she lived after that, beloved and happy and contented."

6. We have thus far considered the usefulness of truth-telling. But it has well been said "The obligation to speak the truth, though may be enforced by utility, is found in the very nature of things." Truth-telling is a

absolute duty. It is binding upon us at all times, in all conditions of life, under all circumstances. The healthy conscience says to him who has it, "Speak the truth;" and such a conscience feels itself wounded and is pained whenever a lie is spoken or acted. It is our "bounden duty" to be truthful, both because we are the children of a God whose word is truth, and because we are brethren of one family wherein the law of love, which, without truth, cannot prevail, is the bond of union. Truth-telling may therefore be called one of the most commanding of the Christian virtues. It is a virtue which springs from that fundamental relation in which we stand toward our fellow-men, — the relation of brothers whom we cannot rightly treat as brothers unless in all our dealings we are true.

7. The sin of untruthfulness is so grave an offence, so fatal to character, so harmful to society, that we should be careful not to allow ourselves to be deceived by any sophistries concerning it. It is said, for example, that cases sometimes arise in which a lie is justifiable, — the case of a city that is besieged, which may be saved by a false word spoken to a spy; or the case of a traveller whom a robber is pursuing with intent to murder, and whose life may be saved if some one who sees the danger misleads the robber by directing him wrongly on the road. But cases of this sort very rarely, if ever, arise in the ordinary experience of mankind. Should any reader of these pages find himself placed in such exceptional circumstances, he may be sure "it will be given him in that same hour" what to do and what to say. Only let him beware of getting into the habit of excusing a lie on the ground that it may do good. Such an argument is based on a false principle,— a principle, too, that works infinitely more harm than can possibly be balanced by the good which it is supposed can be accomplished by it in certain rare and exceptional cases. This principle is that a man may do wrong if he thinks good will come of it; or, in other words, an end that he believes to be good justifies the use of means that he knows to be bad. The only way to be prepared to act aright when a conflict of duties shall arise, is to discharge aright each duty as it comes, and not to seek by specious argument to weaken obligation.

8. We shall be helped to be truthful by overcoming the habits that lead to untruthfulness. One of the most dangerous of these habits is that of using extravagant and exaggerated language in our common talk. Children are much given to this fault, but their elders are not wholly free from it. A child will say that a thing is "perfectly splendid," which is only good or nice. He complains of being "almost dead" when he merely feels a little faint; and in his hasty, unconsidered speech an hour of pleasant sport is magnified into an "awfully jolly time." Now, the mischief which such a way of speaking works, is that the habitual user of extravagant words forfeits the confidence of those who hear him talk. He tries to pass off words for more than they stand for, and so he is never taken at his word. If he argues he cannot convince, for only the truth is convincing; if he gives a statement of events, people mistrust his report; and so it turns out that his strong speech has made him morally weak. Nothing but truth — the simple, unvarnished truth — is really strong; and only by being simple and accurate in every statement does a child or a man inspire confidence in others, and gain that enviable position in which everybody will regard *his* word "as good as his bond."

9. And do not let your voice belie you. Read again the story of Peter's denial of his Lord. (Mark xiv. 66–72.) See how he tried to say two things with one voice. His words said, "I know not Jesus;" but his voice said, "I am of Galilee, and a follower of Jesus." And so by his deception he got himself into a sorry plight, for which he had to suffer the contempt of those who heard him, and the reproaches of his own conscience, that were harder yet to bear. Always seem to be what you are, is a safe rule for young and old. You need not pretend to like those whom you dislike, or say smooth words merely to gain the praise of others. Speak the truth in love; and remember, too, that often *speech is out silver when silence is gold.*

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Recognized probity is the surest of all oaths.

Prevarication prevails where perjury has led the way.

Liars are the cause of all the sins and crimes in the world. — EPICTETUS.

Truth needs no color; beauty, no pencil. — SHAKSPEARE.

Dare to be true; nothing can need a lie;
A fault which needs it most grows two thereby.
GEORGE HERBERT.

Truth is always straightforward. — SOPHOCLES.

Lord, who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that speaketh truth in his heart. — Ps. xv. 1, 2.

And there shall in no wise enter into the holy city anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie. — REV. xxii. 27.

Oh, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!
WALTER SCOTT.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What is an oath?
2. What is swearing?
3. In the first verse of the Lesson passage is the word "*forswear*." What does it mean?
4. Which one of the Ten Commandments forbids swearing? Repeat it.
5. What did Jesus say about swearing? Verses 34–36.
6. Why were the Jews in the time of Christ in the habit of swearing? Note on ver. 33.
7. Is it right for a witness in court to "be sworn"? Read carefully § 2, and say what you think about oath-taking.
8. Repeat the *Golden Text*.
9. How does this verse teach us to tell the truth? Note on ver. 37.
10. Suppose people did not keep their word, and told lies all the time, how could men buy and sell and carry on business?
11. Tell the story of Christie. § 5.
12. A girl who was a witness in court, and had taken the oath to tell the truth, was asked, "Why should you tell the truth?" "Because," she replied, "*it is right*." What do you think of her answer?
13. Is it *ever* right to tell a lie? Give a reason for your answer.
14. Tell the story of Peter's denial of Jesus. Mark xiv. 66–72.
15. What lesson does that story teach?
16. How did Peter afterwards show that he was sorry for the lie he had told? ANS. *He became a brave and devoted apostle of the Master whom he had denied.*
17. How does the use of extravagant language lead to untruthfulness? § 8.
18. What is said in the last part of § 9 about sometimes keeping silent?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. In what sermon of Christ's is the lesson-passage found?
2. Why did Jesus give the precept, "Swear not at all"?
3. What did the Old Testament teach about oaths and swearing? Note on ver. 33 and § 1.
4. How had the Scribes, or teachers of the people, perverted that teaching? Same note and § 1.
5. What reasons are held for saying that Jesus did not forbid *judicial oaths?* § 2.
6. What are some of the reasons urged for the abolition of such oaths?
7. How is the duty of truthfulness *implied* in the teaching of ver. 37?
8. Show the usefulness of truth-telling and honesty in business and social life. §§ 3, 4.
9. How is this illustrated in the story of Christie? § 5.
10. State some reasons for regarding truth-telling as an "*absolute* duty." § 6.
11. Is a lie justifiable in the cases supposed in § 7? and if not, why not?
12. What probably led Peter to deny Jesus? Read Mark xiv. 66–72.
13. What effect did the consciousness of this lie have upon Peter?
14. How could Jesus have any confidence in such a man?
15. Show how the use of extravagant language may lead to untruthfulness. § 8.
16. What is the meaning of the sayi "The truth must not be spoken at all times . § 9, last part.
17. Why is our sense of the nobility of another's character weakened by the discovery that even in a single instance he has told or acted a lie?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The objections urged by Quakers against oath-taking. 2. Is lying to be condemned more because it is dishonorable than because it is harmful? 3. The duty of "keeping a secret."

LESSON XIII.

AGAINST PROFANITY.

Matt. v. 33–37 and xv. 10, 11; Luke vi. 43–45.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Swear not at all.—Matt. v. 34.

THE MEANING.

SPECIAL NOTE.—Let the pupil read again the notes on Matt. v. 33–37 in the preceding lesson.

Matt. v. 34. "*Neither by heaven,*" etc. The Jews thought that if they swore by heaven, or by the earth, or by Jerusalem, or by their own heads, they did nothing that was wrong; for their teachers, the Scribes, had told them that the only oath that meant anything was one in which the *name* of God was used. But the teachings of Jesus made men feel that in using an oath of any kind they were really appealing to the Deity. For why do men swear at all? Is it not to add some supposed strength to their speech? But the only force that there is in an oath comes from the fact that it implies a reference to God. The earth is His, and the heavens are His, "for He made them." To swear, then, by any created thing, is to profane the name of the Maker of all.

Verse 36. "*By thy head.*" We have no control over the growth even of the hairs of our heads. God alone numbereth them, and they grow by laws of His ordaining. To swear by our heads is therefore to appeal to God.

Matt. xv. 11. We are told, in the beginning of this chapter, that the Scribes and Pharisees came from Jerusalem to Jesus, and accused his disciples of wrong doing, because they washed not their hands when they ate bread. (Read the account as given in Mark vii. 1–8.) "*Defileth the man.*" Jesus teaches that a man is not defiled—that is, not made foul and profane—by what he eats or by the way he eats, but by the improper language, and evil disputings, and blasphemies that come out of the mouth.

Luke vi. 43–45. This passage from the shorter report of the Sermon on the Mount given by Luke, brings the saying in ver. 45 into a close and logical connection with the truth that a tree is known by its fruits. Our words reveal our character, just as the fruits that we gather from a tree show us the quality of the tree which produces them.

Verse 45. "*Out of the abundance of the heart,*" etc. (See note on Matt. xii. 34 in Lesson XI.)

THE TEACHING.

1. Our Golden Text explains itself. It means precisely what it says. We are not to swear at all, under any provocation, in any circumstances, or by the use of any form of irreverent speech. Profanity may be defined as an irreverent abuse of speech. It is an act of irreverence to use profane language, because, as has already been explained in the Notes, every oath, however trivial it may seem, contains an implied reference to the Deity; and he who uses it is guilty of indirectly taking God's name in vain. It is, besides, an abuse of speech, because our words should always be the clear and transparent medium of our thoughts, not like painted glass discoloring the pure white rays of truth. Profanity is doubtless with many persons, especially with the young, the mark of thoughtlessness rather than the sign of conscious irreverence. Yet we cannot too often be reminded that

> "Evil is wrought by want of thought
> As well as want of heart."

The habit of using strong ejaculations, — of protesting, by this thing or by that thing, that what we say is true, — of uttering expletives, which, if they have any meaning at all, mean profanity, — is destructive of the healthy tone of one's character. Further than this, strong speech, like strong drink, makes a slave of him who uses it. Many a man who began in boyhood or in youth to use profane language has found it a severe task to break away in later years from the hurtful habit.

2. But profane speech should be avoided for still another reason, — its baleful effect upon human intercourse. Conversation seasoned with oaths and expletives is like a debased currency. The values of words are thrown into confusion. We cannot tell how much is really meant by the loud protestation, the high-sounding appeal to heaven or earth, or the taking of sacred names in vain. Words fitly spoken, that express the speaker's thought without distorting or discoloring it, are indeed like "apples of gold in baskets of silver." But these unfit words, that really obscure the aning they were meant to convey, are

> "Like to the apples on the Dead Sea shore,
> All ashes to the taste."

3. Like harm is wrought in our social relations when our words become the outflow of ill-temper or irritability. It may perhaps be thought that if a man is really angered or irritated he had better give his feelings vent in honest words, than cloak or dissemble them for the sake of appearing to be other than he is. But the question here is not one of honesty, but of the effect that this unbridled speech may have upon our relations with our fellow-men. The wrath of man finding expression in angry words never works the righteousness of God. Such words unfit a man for communion with the Holy Spirit, and equally unfit him to be a true brother in God's human family. Our language should always be "without offence." We are to try at all times and under all circumstances to "live peaceably" with the human beings around us. We cannot keep wholly free from the perversities of their conduct. Their actions will very often irritate us, thwart our plans, threaten our interests, and mar our happiness. But our duty remains unchanged. We are to throw oil on these troubled waters, not add fuel to temper's raging flames. We must move among these disturbing elements in cheerful wisdom and with guarded speech. Our soft answer may turn away another's wrath. Our silence may be as a shield to quench his "fiery darts" of oath and expletive. And while, by putting the bit on our tongue, we shall gain time for reflection, and be governed, perchance, by reason's sober second-thought, we may at the same time disarm the anger and overcome the evil that were threatening to do us harm.

4. The fact that all persons of sense and character detest and condemn this vice of profanity should keep our youth from indulging in a practice that is at once so foolish and so wicked. Of the great philanthropist, John Howard, it is related that as he was standing one day near the door of a printing-office, he heard volleys of oaths and curses from a public house opposite; and buttoning his po

up before he went into the street, he said to the workmen near him: "I always do this whenever I hear men swear, as I think that any one who can take God's name in vain can also steal or do anything else that is bad."

5. When Washington was in command of the Federal army, he gave a general order that all soldiers who used an oath should first be reprimanded, and if that would not deter them from swearing they should then be severely punished. "The feelings of the Commanding General," he said, "are continually wounded by the oaths and imprecations of the soldiers, whenever he is in hearing of them. The name of that Being from whose bountiful goodness we are permitted to exist and enjoy the comforts of life, is incessantly profaned in a manner as wanton as it is shocking. For the sake therefore of religion, decency, and order, the General hopes and trusts that officers of every rank will use their influence and authority to check a vice that is as unprofitable as it is wicked and shameful."

6. Of General Grant, one who knew him intimately has said: "In the sixty-three years of his career an oath never passed his lips, and an obscene word was never uttered by him. Once, when recalling this fact and remarking upon it to him, he said: 'I never learned to swear. When a boy I seemed to have an aversion to it, and when a man I saw the folly of it. I have always noticed, too, that swearing helps to rouse men's ire; and when people get into a passion their adversaries, who keep cool, always get the better of them.'"

7. How weak a defence some profane people make for swearing may be seen by an anecdote told of a teamster who served under General Grant in the army of the Potomac. A man had quoted to him the example of Grant in this respect, hoping to lessen the volume of oaths which the teamster was using, and on which he seemed to be placing his main reliance in moving his mule-team out of a mudhole. His only reply was: "Then there 's one thing certain, — the old man never druv mules" If the readers of this anecdote will promise never to swear except when they drive mules, they will be in little danger of forming the habit of profanity. Their opportunities for using an oath will be as effectually cut off as were those of the sailors on a certain ship whose captain, on taking command of the vessel, asked the crew if they would grant him a single favor. "Ay, ay," cried all hands; "let us know what it is." "Well, my lads, it is this: you must allow me to swear the first oath in this ship. No man must swear an oath before I do." The sailors could not help answering, "Ay, ay," again; and as the captain never swore that first oath, profanity was unknown on the whole voyage.

8. One other abuse of speech, akin to profanity and often associated with it, needs to be mentioned here, — the use of impure and immodest languge. He who indulges in such language betrays a coarse nature. Impure speech not only indicates an impure heart, but it adds to the inward impurity. There is but one safe rule here: Avoid it; turn from it. Not only do not use it yourself, but discountenance its use by your associates. Never listen to any talk that would bring a blush to the cheek of sister or mother were she to know of it. Of General Grant it is told that, on one occasion, when an officer began to tell a story by saying, "As there are no ladies here," Grant indignantly left the room. He would neither utter nor hear any speech that savored of impurity.

9. In three successive lessons we have been learning what was Christ's Doctrine of Words. "If any man offend not in word," the same, according to the Christian standard, is a "perfect man." By the general character of his words, by the tenor of his daily speech, each one of us is making known what we are in our inmost hearts. And by our ordinary conversation, in the common walks of life, with those who are around us in our homes, at school, on the playground, in society, we are building up our character. Happy shall we be if all the words of our mouth are acceptable in the sight of Him who knoweth them altogether, even before they are on the tongue; if of each of us it may be said, as it is written of our blessed Master: "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

The light and habitual taking of God's name betrays a coarse nature and a brutal will. — E. H. CHAPIN.

There are braying men as well as braying asses in the world; for what is loud and senseless talking and swearing but braying? — L'ESTRANGE.

Immodest words admit of no defence. — POPE.

But when foul talk
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion.
MILTON.

The Evil One tempts men through their ambition, their cupidity, or their appetite, until he comes to the profane swearer, *whom he catches without any reward.* — HORACE MANN.

If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man. — JAMES iii. 2.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Repeat the Second Commandment. Exod. xx. 7.
2. Repeat the *Golden Text.*
3. Tell some of the oaths that the Jews used, and show why the use of such expressions is wrong. See notes on Matt. v. verses 34, 36.
4. What did Jesus say, in Matt. xv. 11, makes a man profane? Read the note.
5. Explain Luke vi. 43–45, and show how what we say is like the fruits of a tree.
6. Give some reasons why every kind of swearing is bad. §§ 1, 2.
7. What harm is done if we swear because we are angry? § 3.
8. Tell the story of John Howard. § 4.
9. What order did Washington give to his soldiers about swearing? § 5.
10. What did General Grant think of swearing? § 6.
11. What do you think of the mule-driver's excuse for using oaths? § 7.
12. How did the sea-captain keep the sailors from swearing? § 7.
13. What is said about the use of other kinds of bad language? § 8.
14. What was said of the words that Jesus used? § 9, last sentence.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What sort of teaching on the part of the Jewish scribes led Jesus to give the precepts against swearing in Matt. v. 33–37?
2. Explain those verses.
3. Show how Jesus came to say the words reported in Matt. xv. 11.
4. Show how the words in Luke vi. 45 are logically connected with verses 43 and 44 of the same chapter.
5. Why are all forms of profanity wrong? §§ 1, 2.
6. Why is the provocation of ill-temper no excuse for angry words? § 3.
7. Why was the action of John Howard related in § 4 sensible?
8. What were the reasons assigned by Washington for his order against swearing? § 5.
9. What was the habit of General Grant, and what did he say about profanity? § 6.
10. Was the army-teamster really justified for *his* profanity? § 7.
11. Can we *ever* excuse or justify profane speech? If not, why not?
12. What is the strongest reason against impure language? § 8, and see also the *Golden Saying* from Milton.
13. State with some detail Christ's general Doctrine of Words as explained in Lessons XI., XII., and XIII.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The connection between the use of strong language and profane speech. 2. Is the first *Golden Saying* true of all men who use oaths? 3. The teaching of Milton's *Comus* on purity in word, thought, and life.

LESSON XIV.

ALMSGIVING.

Matt. vi. 1–4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. — Matt. vi. 3.

THE MEANING.

Verse 1. "*Do not your alms before men.*" The word translated *alms* here should be rendered *righteousness*, as the Revised Version gives it. It means all one's good deeds, all righteous actions.

Verse 2. "*Doest alms.*" In ver. 1 the general rule was laid down that the Christian disciple should never do any good deed to gain the praise of men. Now, a special application of the rule is made in the case of almsgiving.

The English word *alms* has an interesting history. It comes from a long Greek word, *el-e-e-mos-y-na.* This word meant, at first, mercifulness; but after a time its meaning was limited to giving money. With this meaning it passed into the Latin tongue, and thence into the languages of modern Europe, till at last the six-syllabled Greek word appeared in the form of the one-syllabled English word *alms.*

"*Sound a trumpet.*" There is no reason to think, as some persons have supposed, that the rich Pharisees had some one go before them to blow a trumpet whenever they distributed their alms. Equally unfounded is the conjecture of certain critics, that reference is made to the clinking of the coin when it was dropped into the trumpet-shaped charity-box in the Synagogue or in the Temple. No Jewish custom of any sort is here referred to; but the figure of speech means simply that some men made, as it were, a great "flourish of trumpets" when they gave alms, — that is, they made a noise about it, in order to attract attention. "*Hypocrites,*" — that is, actors in religion, men who made believe that they were religious. (See the note to ver. 5, in Lesson IV.) "*Have their reward.*" The Greek verb means, have their *full* reward, so that there is nothing more for them to look for. They cared only for the praise of men, and that is all they will ever receive.

Verse 3. "*Let not thy left hand know,*" etc. This sentence may have been suggested by some popular proverb. It enjoins secrecy in almsgiving, in contrast with the parade which the Pharisees were accustomed to make.

Verse 4. "*In secret.*" Jesus does not lay down the absolute rule that we are never to assist in public charities. He condemns the love of display as a motive to the doing of charitable works. True charity is its own sufficient reward. "*Thy Father, who seeth in secret.*" Our best-meant actions may be misjudged by the world; but there is One who always notes the inward motive, the disposition of the heart. "*Openly.*" This word is omitted in the Revised Version. It is not found in the best manuscripts, and its effect is to weaken greatly the force of the passage.

THE TEACHING.

1. In the time of Jesus the condition of great numbers of the people in Palestine was one of poverty, if not of actual want. We learn something from the Gospels themselves about the condition of the poor. Read the story of the *Rich Man and Lazarus* (Luke xvi. 19–31), to see a picture of the miseries of the pauper and the inhumanity of the man of wealth. The presence of so much poverty stimulated the benevolent to do something for its relief. Charity was an ancient virtue among the Jews. Their laws made provision for the needy; their prophets upheld the cause of the poor. Read the old Hebrew law given in Deut. xv. 7, 8, and observe the kindly and humane spirit which breathes through it. Read also the beautiful story of Ruth, for an illustration of the charity which the Jews showed to the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless. And note the fact that the Hebrew worship was accompanied by the giving of offerings "for charity's sake." Not only were the tithes which were raised for the priests to be shared by them with the poor, but there were also in the Women's Court of the Temple thirteen receptacles for voluntary offerings (see Mark xii. 41), one of which was devoted to alms for the education of poor children of good family.

2. The Pharisees, like the members of other Jewish sects, were zealous in almsgiving. Every week, in their synagogues, they made collections for the poor, and publicly displayed the ministration of their charities. While Jesus warned his followers against the worldly and ostentatious spirit displayed by the Pharisees in their giving of alms, he took it for granted that out of the brotherly love which his teachings inspired, "the charities that heal and soothe and bless" would spring up as the flowers that sprinkle the meadows when the earth awakens from its winter's sleep.

3. The special features of the teaching of Jesus concerning almsgiving were these: First, he taught that to relieve physical suffering, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and comfort the sick, is the natural expression and the best test of humane feelings. His doctrine upon this point went further than to inculcate benevolence as an act of morality. He made charity an essential part of "pure and undefiled religion." Men's final acceptance before the Judge of all nations would depend upon the deeds of mercy they had done (Matt. xxv. 31–40). And he whose beloved disciple taught that no man can truly love God, whom he hath not seen, unless he loves his brother whom he hath seen, was himself the best example of t truth. In him the sick and suffering found a helper, the poor a friend, and the outc a brother. No eulogy of his life shines re brightly in the sight of want and woe than simple sentence: *He went about doing good.*

4. But, secondly, Jesus set almsgiving in its true relation to other Christian duties. He never taught that physical comfort was the highest end for charity to gain. "It was not his great object to bring about a state of things in which the poorest shall be sure of a meal." On the contrary, he taught that the first thing which men should seek after was "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The man who had "laid up much goods for many years," and was enjoying every phy l comfort, was a rich simpleton, whose soul as empty as his barns were full. Jesus stress, not on bodily comfort, but on spiritual well-being; and the religion which he taught has shown to the world through the Christian ages the startling paradox of a gospel that puts a slight upon outward things in its supreme concern for the things of the spirit, and yet has done more than any other agency the world has ever known to relieve the distresses banish the woes of suffering humanity. W ministering to men's highest wants, *and becaus of that ministry*, it has stooped to the relief of their lower needs. "Its missionary spirit longs to establish some decent harmony between the outer lot and the inner dignity of the s of God."

5. And, thirdly, Jesus teaches us in our lesson-passage the true motive and method of almsgiving. We are not to give alms to the

poor that men may praise us for doing good. To make a show of either our charity or our piety is to be a hypocrite — that is, an actor — before the world. Men who seek to do good works in this way spoil the goodness of the works themselves. For the true way to do good to our fellow-men is *to make them better;* and no one is made better by beholding an act of hypocrisy, or by seeing a man try to set himself up on the pedestal of his benevolent action. The injunction given in another part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 16), to let one's light shine before men, means that the Christian disciple is to act out his religion in society and before society, that society may get the benefit of it. But a display of good deeds benefits nobody. The lookers-on assign the action to a selfish motive, and the doer of the deed fosters a harmful pride.

6. Every child and young person should learn what it is to do charitable deeds by actually doing them. For our Sunday-school scholars there are many ways of helping deserving objects of charity. Missions to the children of the poor, homes for orphans and for the aged, hospitals, and asylums need continual aid. Let the children in our Sunday schools early learn about these good institutions. If possible, let the classes sometimes visit these missions and homes. Let them give of what is their own, and not merely the pennies that their fathers or mothers put into their hands. True charity is sharing what is ours, — bestowing on the needs of others that which has cost us something. We should give some part of ourselves — our loving thought, our self-denial, our brotherly kindness — with each gift that we take or send to the poor. Read in this connection Lowell's beautiful poem, "The Vision of Sir Launfal."

7. The spirit of Christian charity prompts the true follower of Jesus to do a great many things for others besides relieving extreme poverty and distress. We are to share some of our comforts with others, as well as give of our money. All around us are those who in many things are less favored than we are, to whose lives our thoughtful remembrances would add new joy and open fresh sources of happiness. To lend a book to some one who has few opportunities for getting good books, or to read aloud to some one who cannot read much to himself, to give a drive or carry a bunch of flowers, sometimes to speak a kind word or to give even a smile of love to a lonely or neglected child, — these are all blessed charities that soothe and heal. We can all give more of them than we ever have given; and gladdening other lives by our tokens of good will, we shall grow more into the likeness of the Heavenly Father, who gives to all his children things of beauty as well as things of use, — the wayside flowers and the birds' sweet songs, as well as the sun and the rain that make the corn to grow for the bread of the poor. If the scholars who read this lesson have a copy of the "Dayspring" for June, 1885, let them read the charming story by Miss Kate L. Brown, about "Nelly Milton's Vacation." Perhaps it will suggest to them some new ways of giving alms. Being poor is not the same thing as being the poorest. The child who has but five playthings is poor in comparison with the one who has ten; and the child who has many toys gives to the poor, and so "lends to the Lord," if he shares what he has with those who have less.

8. The higher kind of almsgiving which is required of the disciple of Jesus in these modern days is, to give of our time and our thought to prevent the evils of poverty and ward off the sufferings of the poor. This some of the most humane and most Christian people in our country are now trying to do. They seek to help the poor to help themselves, and to depend upon their own prudence and savings when they are sick or out of work, rather than upon public or private alms. The older scholars will find an instructive lesson on the way to help the poor, in Rev. C. F. Dole's manual, "The Citizen and the Neighbor," chap. xv. And if the younger scholars will turn back to Lesson III. of this Series, they will find in § 7 a good illustration of the harm that is done by giving alms without thought or care. In all our works of charity we should combine wisdom with kindness. By taking a little pains we may do good by our alms, when a careless gift would benefit neither him who gave nor him who received.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

The office of liberality consists in giving with judgment. — CICERO.

It is more delightful and more honorable to give than to receive. — EPICURUS.

That is the best charity which, like the river Nile, has the several streams thereof seen, but the fountain concealed.

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. — ACTS xx. 35.

If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor . . . and have not love, it profiteth me nothing. — 1 COR. xiii. 3.

We owe to man higher succors than food and fire, — we owe to man, *man*. — EMERSON.

We are only rich in what we give, and poor only through what we refuse. — MADAME SWETCHINE.

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall men give into your bosom. — LUKE vi. 38.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What does Jesus say in Matt. vi. 1, and what does the verse mean?
2. What is meant in ver. 2 by doing alms?
3. What have some persons thought was meant in this verse by sounding a trumpet? Note.
4. What do you think it means?
5. Who are "hypocrites"? Note.
6. How did the men spoken of in ver. 2 get "their reward"? Note.
7. What does the *Golden Text* mean?
8. What is meant by the first part of ver. 4? Note.
9. What story in the Gospels shows us that there were very poor people in Palestine in the time of Christ? § 1.
10. What Book of the Old Testament contains a beautiful story of the care of the ancient Jews for the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless? § 1.
11. What is the first precept that Jesus gave about almsgiving? § 3.
12. How was he an example of this? § 3.
13. What does he teach us about *the way* in which we should give alms? § 5.
14. How may children learn to be charitable? § 6.
15. What other ways of being charitable are there besides giving money? § 7.
16. What is the story of "Nelly Milton's Vacation," referred to in § 7?
17. What is said in the last part of § 7 about giving and sharing?
18. Tell the story given in § 7 of Lesson III.
19. What does that story teach?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Give the different translations of ver. 1, and show what the verse means.
2. What does the word "alms" come from, and how has it changed its original meaning? Note on ver. 2.
3. Explain the phrase, "sound a trumpet." Note.
4. Who were the "hypocrites" referred to in ver. 2?
5. What is taught or implied in ver. 4 about *public* charities? Note.
6. What is the true meaning of the last part of ver. 4?
7. Mention some passages in the Gospels that show the extent and character of poverty in Palestine in the time of Christ.
8. What do we learn from the Old Testament about charity among the Jews?
9. How was almsgiving connected with the Temple-worship? § 1.
10. What did the Pharisees do for the poor? § 2.
11. How does Christianity make "charity" a test of religion? § 3.
12. What is the true relation of almsgiving to other Christian duties? § 4.
13. Explain the "paradox" of Christ's teachings concerning spiritual and material well-being. § 4.
14. What is the right *method* of almsgiving? § 5.
15. Reconcile Matt. vi. 3 with v. 16.
16. Mention some ways of learning how to give alms. § 6.
17. What lesson is enforced in Lowell's poem, "The Vision of Sir Launfal"?
18. How may we share our comforts with others?
19. Give an illustration of the harm done by careless and indiscriminate charities.
20. What is the work that is done by the "Associated Charities" and "Union Relief Societies"?
21. How can each one of us help in this kind of work?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Causes of poverty in the time of Christ. 2. Almsgiving in the early Christian Church. 3. The abuses and harm that came from the old-fashioned almsgiving. 4. How to help the poor to help themselves.

LESSON XV.

AGAINST COVETOUSNESS.

Luke xii. 13–21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.—Luke xii. 15.

THE MEANING.

Verse 13. "*Master*" (that is, teacher), "*speak to my brother.*" This man had probably had a quarrel with his brother about some property. His words suggest that he was not satisfied with that portion of the inheritance which came to him by law from his father's estate, and wanted a different division to be made. (See note on Luke xv. 12 in Lesson I.)

Verse 14. "*Man,*" etc. This word shows the indignation that Jesus felt at being thus interrupted. He was teaching spiritual truth; but this man wished him to turn aside to settle a purely worldly case.

Verse 15. "*Beware of covetousness,*"—better, as in the Revised Version, "*Keep yourselves from all covetousness.*" A covetous man is one who, in seeking to add to what he has, sets his whole heart upon getting what is not his, so that he is willing even to sacrifice others to indulge himself. "*A man's life,*" etc. A more literal rendering brings out the meaning better: "*For not because a man hath abundance, doth his life consist in the things which he possesseth.*" The thought is that no man's life depends on, or consists in, what he possesses, even when he has abundance. (Compare Matt. iv. 4.) The word *life* has two meanings in this passage, expressed in the Greek by two different words. One is the life *which we live;* the other, the life *by which we live.* One is our *living;* and this we may have out of our worldly goods. The other is our true life, which proceeds from God, "in whom we live and have our being;" and this life does not consist in what is outside of us. Still less does our higher life, the peace and blessedness of a heart that is at one with God, depend on these earthly possessions.

Verse 17. "*Thought within himself,*" etc. The man is simply thinking of his own ease and comfort. We look, as it were, into his inmost heart, and see there no thought of God, but only scheming and planning for greater worldly enjoyment for himself in coming years.

Verse 18. "*Barns.*" The Greek word includes storehouses and warehouses of every kind. "*Bestow,*"—that is, store up. "*Fruits,*" equivalent to our English word *crops.*

Verse 19. "*Soul.*" The man addresses his soul as the seat of the affections, the centre and abode of his excessive longing for pleasure.

Verse 20. "*God said unto him.*" This means that the man himself felt that this sudden taking off was from God,—a word of chastisement for his folly.

Verse 21. "*Rich toward God.*" They are rich toward God who are rich *in* God,—that is, who make God the object of their desires, and so are partakers of His righteousness and His love, doing good to others as His goodness is lavished upon all.

THE TEACHING.

1. We shall be better able to understand the teaching of Jesus against covetousness, if we first picture to ourselves the scenes which preceded this discourse. The conflict between the "new teacher" and the Pharisees was reaching its height. In order that they might entrap him in his speech, one of their number invited him to come and lunch at his house; and because he dared to recline at the table "with unwashed hands," they showed their disapproval, if not their contempt, of him. Straightway rising to the height of the occasion, Jesus exposed, in words that still seem ringing with his calm and measured indignation, the hypocrisy which characterized these "leaders of the people." (Luke xi. 37–52.)

2. But in the mean time crowds of the people had gathered at the place. So numerous was the multitude that "they trod one upon another," eager to catch every word that fell from the Master's lips. To this surging throng Jesus spoke, — "his spirit still aglow with the just and mighty indignation by which it had been pervaded." "Beware," he said, "of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is *hypocrisy*. There is One before whose eye no secret can be hid. Fear Him, and you need have no other fear. You are in the hands of God. He who notes the sparrow's fall will take care of His children." While Jesus is thus discoursing, a man in the crowd thinks that he can do a good stroke of business for himself, if he can get this Rabbi, who is so popular with the multitude, to settle a private grievance which he has against his brother. But Jesus at once perceives that the motive of this man is but another form of the same self-love which, among the religious leaders of the people, showed itself in hypocrisy. With words that vibrate with the same moral indignation which the mock righteousness of the Pharisees had roused, he repudiates the idea that as a religious teacher he has anything to do with "judging" or "dividing" in worldly affairs. But the man's ill-timed request gave another occasion for laying the axe at the root of that poison-tree of selfishness, which was working so much injury to society and to individuals. "Beware," says Jesus, "of covetousness, — of that excessive desire of worldly possessions which unfits a man for the kingdom of God."

3. Then follows the short parable of the rich fool, — a plain homely story that admirably illustrates the folly as well as the unworthiness of the worship of riches. Like the parable of the Good Samaritan, it reads more like a history than a story. A single instance is taken to show a general experience. This partic rich man was one who had got his gains by honorable and lawful means. His acres were fertile, and they "yielded plentifully." He was accumulating produce faster than he could store it in his warehouses. To pull down his "barns" and build greater, was a proper and prudent course to take. So far the rich man was no fool. His folly began when he made it appear that he had forgotten God, and was putting his whole trust in "uncertain riches." He acted as if he really thought that money, and not Wisdom, had "length of days" to give to men. He was heaping up his treasures for himself alone. It was "*my* crops" and "*my* goods" and "*my* barns" of which he talked in his silly discourse to his "soul." But by his messenger, Death, God says to him: "Thou foolish and wicked man, thy soul is not thine to feed and pamper for long years as thou didst suppose. It belongs to l who created it, and from whom have come all the good gifts thou hast been so selfishly enjoying. Thou hast heaped up riches, knowest not who shall gather them." "So," added the Teacher, "is every one who layeth up treasures for himself, and is not rich towards God." The true wisdom is so to use what God enables us to acquire that we may lay up for ourselves the heavenly riches that do not perish with the using.

4. Two lessons are clearly taught in this parable. The first is, that there is no greater folly than trusting in riches, since no man can tell how soon he may lose these earthly possessions. This lesson may be called a moral

truism, common to Jesus with the Jewish Rabbis of his time. He taught it merely as a Jewish moralist. We find the same lesson enforced by a similar story in the Hebrew Talmud. Rabbi Simeon — the Talmudic record says — went to a certain feast to which he had been invited. His host, who was the father of an infant son, gave wine that was seven years old to his guests to drink, and said, "With this wine I will grow old in the joy of my son." On his way home Rabbi Simeon finds the angel of death, and observes that he is very sad. "Who art thou?" he asks. He saith, "I am the messenger of the Lord!" "Why, then, art thou sad?" "I am sad," answered the angel, "for the speeches of those who say, 'I will do this or that erelong.' That man with whom thou hast been feasting, and that boasted among you, 'Behold, with this wine I will grow old in the joy of my son,' — behold, the time draws nigh that within thirty days he must be snatched away."

5. But in the words which Jesus added to his parable, he rose far above the mere moralist: "*So is he who layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. And he said to his disciples, 'Be not anxious for your life,'*" etc. Jesus has no word of condemnation for wealth in and for itself. If he nowhere urges men to work for value, to buy and sell for gain, it is from the conviction that all such interests will be sufficiently attended to. The message he brings to men will unfit them for no relation they sustain to the world. Rather will it make them see all worldly things in their true light. How much grander a thing is the life than the meat that sustains it! How much nobler the body than the raiment that clothes it! The fundamental law of the kingdom which Christ came to establish, is that the things we are accustomed to call our own — our money, our time, our influence — belong to God. They are ours only to use; and therefore our chief concern is not with getting them, but with using them aright.

6. This, then, is Christ's Doctrine of Wealth. Man has no real ownership in anything that he possesses. Wealth is placed in our hands to use it for God. If we fully realized our sonship to God and our brotherhood with all men, we should regard earthly goods simply as means, of value only as we can employ them in the higher service of the divine kingdom upon earth. The covetous spirit, the restless and feverish pursuit of gain, is heathenish, unworthy of the disciple of Jesus. It springs from distrust and uncharitableness. The trusting spirit believes that God knows that his children have need of food and shelter, of raiment and warmth, and of the means wherewith the hunger of the mind as well as that of the body may be satisfied. Resting in this faith, the trusting soul is content to gain such portion of "this world's goods" as comes from faithful and honest toil, from thrift and prudence and honorable industry; but it recognizes the Christian rule of all possession, — namely, that wealth, being the joint product of the labor of many and the bounty of God, is "morally sacred for purposes of good." A man has no right to waste his money, or to use it for that which does no good to any one; and the needs of his fellow-men will be continually in his mind as he regards himself in the light of a steward or trustee. He should give as freely as he has received, and with the same wisdom by which he gained his wealth. He should feel and discharge his responsibility to the community on whose united labor and under whose protecting laws and useful institutions he acquired what he has. This he should do, not because he believes in the ungodly socialism that says, "What is thine, is mine;" but rather because he holds to the nobler and Christian view of property, which says, "Whatever thou hast belongs to God, and whatever I have belongs to God; you and I must use what we have according to God's will."

7. What the will of God is respecting the use of earthly goods is finely illustrated by St. Augustine. "God desires not," he says, "that thou shouldst lose thy riches, *but that thou shouldst change their place.* Suppose a friend should enter thy house, and should find that thou hast lodged thy fruits on a damp floor, and he, knowing the tendency of those fruits to spoil, should give thee counsel of this sort, saying, 'Brother, thou losest the things which

with great labor thou hast gathered. Thou hast put them in a damp place; in a few days they will corrupt.' 'And what, brother, shall I do?' '*Raise them to a higher room.*'" So the right way to use "this world's goods" is to raise them to a higher place by making them the means of helping others and of building up truth and righteousness on the earth.

8. Closely connected with this Christian rule concerning the right use of riches, is another rule which is clearly laid down in the teachings of Jesus, — namely, that our highest endeavors should be directed to the acquisition of heavenly treasures, of those "fruits of the spirit," which alone will be gathered into the celestial granaries, — love, joy, peace, kindness, faithfulness, meekness. He whose heart is set upon gaining these possessions will not be troubled by that love of money which is the root of so much evil in the world. He will set its true value on each earthly possession, and never cheat his soul by thinking that his goods are worth more than his honor, or a strip of land than peace of mind.

9. Of special worth, in such a man's estimation, will be that spirit of contentment which, "with godliness," is itself "great gain." For he will look upon all things as being in a sense his own. To him, whatever his worldly position may be, belong all the glories of outward Nature. The beauty of the landscape, the pleasantness of the light, the splendors of clouds at sunset and of moonlit skies, and the soft glow of the stars at midnight, — these and numberless more of those things of beauty which are a joy forever to the heart that loves them, are his possessions. But, more than this, he enters, by his power of admiration, into the mental ownership of all that is beautiful in other men's possessions. Why should he envy his wealthy friend whose handsome house and grounds, and all that they contain, he has as much delight in seeing as their owner can ever have?

10. True riches, then, are an inward possession, not a store of external goods. We gain new wealth not by acquiring more treasures, but by finding more values in what we have. To l n the number of our desires is also to increase our real riches. Our envy, our fool ambitions, our love of glitter and parade, more to make up our poverty, than strai circumstances, or a small account at the ba Plain living, simple tastes, "high thinkin and thoughtful charities make a man rich ward God, and honorable in the sight of me

11. A single word may be said, in conclusi on the moral perils that attend both the p suit and the possession of worldly riches. R son and experience accord with the voice Holy Scripture, in warning us of these dang The passion of accumulation is, like some the mighty forces of Nature, safe and benefic only when it is wisely regulated. In our m ern life the great peril comes from men's ha to be rich. The spectacle of vast fortu suddenly acquired by a scarcity of supply he or an excess of demand there, awakens a fe ish desire to take part in the game of specu tion, and "try one's luck." Or the wish gain wealth quickly, makes men resort at f to doubtful, and afterwards to dishonest, w of carrying on their business. There is no n of giving examples of the over-reaching, frauds and thefts, the shifts and pretences, t too often attend the getting of wealth in American life to-day. The only safety for young is to begin their business life with right view of values, — setting manhood ab money, and regarding the virtues of a no character as possessions never to be barte for gain or soiled by the base touch of ill-got gold. Let them also start in their busin career with the right idea of the influenc wealth upon its possessor. Wealth can and often is, used for good ends. Christi ity would be a failure in the world, did not great gospel of brotherhood reach and influe the rich men who "profess and call themsel Christians." But the too common admirat of mere wealth is still one of the greatest l drances to the progress of pure religion. T careful observer of human nature has to lam the evil effect which, in the majority of ca wealth still has upon the heart of its poss sor, "making it," in Dr. Dewey's forci words, "proud, haughty, and impatient, r bing it of its simplicity, modesty, and humil

bereaving it of its large and gentle and considerate humanity." We need to hear in America, to-day, the words once spoken to them of old time in far-off Judæa: "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

He hath riches sufficient who hath enough to be charitable. — SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

Ah, if the rich were rich as the poor fancy riches! — EMERSON.

Riches are for the comfort of life, and not life for the accumulation of riches. — SAADI.

He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent. — PROVERBS xxviii. 20.

Riches certainly make themselves wings. — PROVERBS xxiii. 5.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. — PROVERBS xxii. 1.

Not greedy of filthy lucre. — 1 TIM. iii. 3.

Rich in good works. — 1 TIM. vi. 18.

Rich, from the very want of wealth,
In heaven's best treasures, peace and health.
GRAY.

There is a burden of care in getting riches, fear in keeping them, temptation in using them, and a burden of account at last to be given up concerning them. — MATTHEW HENRY.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Why did the man ask Jesus the question in ver. 13?
2. What does the *Golden Text* mean? Note on ver. 15.
3. Explain the words "barns," "bestow," and "fruits," in ver. 18. Note.
4. Explain ver. 20. Note.
5. Explain ver. 21. Note.
6. Where was Jesus when he gave this talk about covetousness? § 1.
7. What had he been saying before he was interrupted? § 2.
8. Relate the "parable," or story, of the "Rich Fool." Verses 16–20 and § 3.
9. Tell the story given in § 4, and show its meaning.
10. What is the great law of the kingdom that Jesus came to establish? § 5, last part.
11. What does "ungodly socialism" say about riches? Last paragraph of § 6.
12. What is "socialism"?
13. What is the Christian view of property? § 6, last clause.
14. How did St. Augustine illustrate the right use of worldly goods? § 7.
15. How may one be rich in the "fruits of the spirit"? § 8.
16. In what sense is all we see our own? § 9.
17. What dangers do you think there are in getting and in having riches?
18. Repeat the last sentence in § 11.
19. Who said it, and what does it mean?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What was the occasion of the interruption of the discourse of Jesus? Note on ver. 13.
2. What had he been talking about, and to whom? § 1.
3. Explain fully ver. 15. Note.
4. What does ver. 17 show us of the character of the "Rich Man"? Note.
5. Explain ver. 18. Note.
6. What does "soul" in ver. 19 mean? Note.
7. Explain verses 20 and 21. Notes.
8. What was there in the man's request (in ver. 13) to awaken the indignation of Jesus? § 2.
9. What is covetousness?
10. Relate the parable of the "Rich Fool."
11. What is the *first* lesson taught in this parable? § 4.
12. Tell the story of Rabbi Simeon.
13. What *higher* truth does Jesus teach in ver. 21? § 5.
14. State in your own words Christ's Doctrine of Wealth. § 6.
15. Contrast the view of the socialist and that of the Christian concerning property. § 6, last clause.
16. Give St. Augustine's illustration. § 7.
17. What rule is laid down in § 8?
18. How may we *own* what we cannot possess? § 9.
19. What are "true riches"? § 10.
20. What moral perils attend the pursuit and possession of riches? § 11.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The "passion for a fortune," how far is it legitimate? 2. The general attitude of Jesus toward the rich. 3. Earning a competency and getting rich by commercial or stock gambling. 4. The moral perils from great wealth in our American life.

LESSON XVI.

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

Matt. xv. 1–9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Honor thy father and thy mother.—Matt. xv. 4.

THE MEANING.

Verse 1. "*Which were of Jerusalem;*" better, as in the Revised Version, "*Then come to Jesus from Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes.*" These men were undoubtedly sent by the Jewish rulers to entrap Jesus in his speech. "*Scribes,*" the Rabbis, or religious teachers of the Jews.

Verse 2. "*Tradition,*"—that is, what had been handed down from the past by the teachers. This was in many ways very different from what was written down in the Hebrew Scriptures. "*Wash not their hands.*" One reason why the popular sect among the Jews was called the *Pharisees,*—that is, the *Separatists,*—was that they separated themselves from other people in order to be stricter in their observ ance of the pious customs handed down to them. They insisted on washing their hands before eating, not for the sake of cleanliness, but for fear of having touched something that their traditions called unholy. The story is told of one Rabbi who, being in prison, when a little water was given him, preferred dying ' thirst to eating without washing his hands.

Verse 4. "*God commanded.*" This is Fifth Commandment given by Moses. Exod. xx. 12 and also xxi. 17.)

Verse 5. "*It is a gift.*" One of the str ways in which the Scribes evaded God's mand was to call that which a son oug give to his father, if he would truly h him, a gift to God,—that is, a gift devot the Temple,—and then say that the son keep this vow, no matter how much his fa might be made to suffer by it. The co translation of this verse is given in the Re Version. Let the pupil also read, for com son, Mark vii. 9–13.

Verse 7. "*Hypocrites,*"—that is, p make-believes, or *actors* of religion. quotation here is from Isaiah xxix. 13.

Verse 9. "*Commandments of men.*" commands which men give have no auth unless they are based on God's laws, and be resolved in every case into a *Thus saith Lord.*

THE TEACHING.

1. A GOOD way to see what Christ's new Law of Obedience was, is to compare what the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians vi. 1–3 with the account given in our lesson-passage of the manner in which the Jewish Scribes had made the old law of no effect. "Children," wrote the Christian Apostle, "obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth." But the Jewish teachers in the time of Christ had contrived to evade this natural duty of obedience and honor to parents. If a son who should have taken care of an aged father or mother pronounced over his property the magic word "*Corban*," — that is, it is a gift to God, — he was free from the obligation to support his parent. Thus, by pretending to be very pious, a man might be released from the simplest requirement of the natural law of morality.

2. For the commandment given by Moses that every one should honor his father and his mother is based on the law that home life, as well as life in the community and the State, requires obedience to rightful authority. As John Ware so well says: "Home joy, happiness, growth, all that is peculiar and best about home, are because of it. As in the universe all harmony is because of one controlling will, all order because of consent to law, so in the home harmony and order, the topmost graces and virtues, are through obedience. . . . In the true home obedience will be claimed and yielded *as a thing of course*."

3. Is it asked: "Why should this obedience be claimed?" The answer is, that the well-being of every one in the home depends upon it. Without order, deference to the claims of others, and conformity to the law of right, there can be neither happiness nor moral growth in the home. But order implies some one to enforce it. When deference to the just claims of others is refused, there must be some power to secure it; and when the law of right is disregarded, there must be a ruler to give orders and to see that those orders are carried out. Moreover, the home is the training-school for the larger life which the child is to live in the world, and hence there rests upon the parents the responsibility of fitting the child for that life in the best possible way. But without obedience to law and to those who hold rightful authority in the State, a man is unfit to be a citizen. Even to exercise authority aright a man must first have learned what it is to be obedient to authority.

4. But the claim of a parent for the obedience of his child rests also on other reasons. The care of the father and the love of the mother for the child demand the child's obedience, in order that this care may accomplish its object and this love work only good. It is with the laws of the home as with God's great laws in the universe. They are given for the good of those who are subject to them, but this good can only be reached through the obedience of the subject. The fire that warms us and cooks our food will burn and destroy us if we do not heed its laws. So when a child disobeys his father's command or slights his mother's loving entreaty, he loses the good which was meant for him, and injures himself while he makes his parents unhappy.

5. So, on the other hand, the reasons why the child should obey his parents are based on the love and trust which, if the child always does what he knows is right, will grow up naturally in his heart. For love begets love; and unless there is something wrong on the part of the child, the affection of the parent will be responded to by the love which prompts to filial obedience. A child will also obey his parents because he feels he can trust in them, — in their wisdom and knowledge as well as in their loving-kindness.

6. But Jesus would have us see that obedience to parents is one way of showing our reverence to God. An old Jewish saying reads: "God could not be everywhere; so he made mothers." This only means that God speaks to the child through the voice of the mother. Obedience to parents is thus a divine law. God puts his human children into fami-

lies, that they may be gently and wisely taught the great lesson of obedience to law. On our learning that lesson and practising it while we are young depends our future success in life, as well as the growth of a noble character. We live in a world where we are all like the soldiers of the centurion who came to Jesus. We are "under authority." There are laws and rulers that say to us "Go;" and go we must if we would lead useful and happy lives. But we are also like soldiers in this, that if we would be ready to obey when the command comes to us we must be *trained* in obedience. The story is told us in the early chronicles of England that Harold the king told his soldiers to stand together and keep their ranks on the battle-field; for if they broke their lines, he said, the Normans would surely defeat them. For six long hours the battle raged. Three times the Norman knights attacked the English line, and three times the English hurled them back. Then the Normans pretended to flee, when in their excitement the English forgot Harold's order, broke their line, and rushed after the foe. But the Normans turning round dashed past them, gained the English p on, and won the battle. Had these soldiers t thoroughly trained to obey, they might have been the victors in that eventful field.

7. The great Teacher of the Law of Obedience was himself the example for children to follow. Read the story of his going to Jerusalem, a twelve-year-old boy (Luke ii. 42–52), of his staying behind in the Temple, and of his gentle and touching reply to his mother: "Did not *you* know where I would be, in my F enly Father's house?" showing how d he reverenced the teachings of that pious home in Nazareth. Then read the significant words that follow: "He went down with t and was subject unto them." Do we wo that the boy who was obedient in the home grew "in favor with men" as well as with God? And is it not clear to every one who reads the life of Jesus that, having learned obedience to his parents in his childhood, he was educated through such obedience to do in all things — even in giving up at last his own life for mankind — his Heavenly Father's will?

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

The wicked obey from fear, but the good from love. — ARISTOTLE.

Obedience is the mother of success wedded to safety. — ÆSCHYLUS.

To their children, parents are heaven's lieutenants. — SHAKSPEARE.

Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing in the Lord. — COL. iii. 20.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. For what did the Pharisees and Scribes go from Jerusalem to see Jesus? Note on ver. 1.
2. Who were the *Scribes?* Note.
3. What is meant by "*tradition*"? Note on ver. 2.
4. Who were the Pharisees? Note.
5. Why did they insist on washing their hands before eating? Note.
6. Tell the story given in the note.
7. In which of the Ten Commandments is our Golden Text found?
8. Repeat the Commandment.
9. What did the Scribes mean when they said of anything, "It is a gift"? Note on ver. 5.
10. How did they break God's commandment? Note and last part of § 1.
11. What do you think ver. 9 means?
12. Repeat what the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians vi. 1–3. § 1.
13. What is said in § 4 about the claim of a parent to be obeyed?
14. Why do we need to *learn* obedience? § 6.
15. Tell the story given in the last part of § 6.
16. How is Jesus an example to us of obedience? § 7.
17. What sometimes tempts you to disobey your parents?
18. What ought you to do when you are thus tempted?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What was the occasion on which Jesus gave the *Golden Text?*
2. Who were the Scribes and the Pharisees?
3. What is the difference between "tradition" and "Scripture"?
4. Why did the Pharisees insist on the washing of hands before eating? Note on ver. 2.
5. What story illustrates their strictness in these matters? Note.
6. Explain fully the meaning of the expression, "It is a gift," in verse 5. Note, and compare Mark vii. 9–13.
7. Give the quotation from Isaiah, and explain ver. 9.
8. How did the vow "Corban" enable men to evade the Fifth Commandment? § 1.
9. On what is that Commandment based? § 2.
10. Why is obedience rightfully claimed by parents? § 3.
11. What analogy may be drawn between the laws of the home and other laws? § 4.
12. Give other reasons why a child should render obedience to his parents. § 5.
13. Show how this obedience is a form of reverence to God. § 6.
14. Show the value of being trained in habits of obedience. § 6.
15. Give the illustration from English history. § 6.
16. Give any other illustrations of the value of the habit of obedience.
17. Show how Jesus illustrated the law of obedience to parents. § 7.
18. Why is the Golden Saying of Æschylus a true saying?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Jewish casuistry, as shown by such vows as that of Corban. 2. The ground of the hostility of the Pharisees to Jesus. 3. Reconcile with Matt. xv. 4 the teaching of Matt. x. 37, and compare also Luke xiv. 26, 27.

LESSON XVII.

GRATITUDE TO BENEFACTORS.

Matt. xxvi. 6–13; compare Mark xiv. 3–9, and John xii. 1–8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.—Matt. xxvi. 12.

THE MEANING.

Verse 6. "*Jesus was in Bethany.*" We learn from John's narrative of this event that it took place "six days before the Passover," or on the day before that Sunday on which Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Bethany, the home of Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, was in the immediate suburbs of Jerusalem, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and about a mile and a half from the city. "*In the house of Simon the leper.*" Of course Simon was not *then* a leper. He may have been one of those whom Jesus had healed. He was probably a near relative of the family of Mary and Martha, or possibly the landlord in whose house they lived, so that there is nothing strange in the statement made by John in his report of the event, that "Martha served at the table."

Verse 7. The woman mentioned here was, as we learn from the account in John's Gospel, Mary the sister of Martha. "*An alabaster cruse.*" This cruse was a flask having a long neck, and when filled with ointment was sealed at the top. Alabaster was a precious stone in antiquity; but the Greek word also means a peculiar form of vessel (without regard to its material) in which costly ointment was kept. In Mark's account of the anointing it is said that the woman broke the cruse; that is, she broke the narrow neck of the flask through which the ointment would have only dripped, and so was enabled to *pour* it freely out. "*Precious ointment.*" Mark tells us that this was "*spikenard,*" or, as we read in the footnote of the Revised Version, "*pure* (i. e. *liquid*) *nard.*" John says a pound of this "spikenard" was used; and Judas asked, "Why was it not sold for three hundred pence?" would have been equal in amount to about $50 of our money. But as a "penny," or *denarius*, was the ordinary pay for day's labor in the time of Christ, the cost of the perfume is more nearly expressed by $300.

Verse 8. "*The disciples.*" John says, and with more accuracy, that it was Judas Isc who was indignant and cried out against the waste.

Verse 10. "*Why trouble,*" etc., — that is, "Why annoy her by your uncalled-for critic and implied blame?" "*A good work,*"—more exactly, "a noble and morally beautiful deed."

Verse 12. "*To prepare me for burial.*" Jesus does not say that Mary was actually thinking of his death and burial when she poured upon him the precious perfume. But the act came to his own mind like a providential event. She was only expressing her grateful love; but he interpreted the act as being really something more than the honoring of a benefactor. It was as if his body, so soon to hang on the cross, had thus been embalmed beforehand.

Verse 13. "*This gospel,*"—as if Jesus had been speaking of it before. But what he evidently had in mind was the gospel, or good tidings, of that sacrificing love which led Jesus to the cross, and in which God's love for man is so fully revealed. In the hidden motive of love from which Mary's act of anointing had proceeded, was the spirit in which Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice to redeem the world.

THE TEACHING.

1. It is pleasant to find so lovely a virtue as gratitude to benefactors illustrated in the Gospels by so beautiful a story as that which is given in our lesson-passage. We have three reports of the same event. Those given in Matthew and Mark agree in almost every particular; but the best account is that which John gives. The story is so clearly and fully told by him that we can hardly help believing that the scene and the characters were more accurately and intimately known by the writer than by the authors of the first two Gospels. "How fondly," says Dr. Sears, "does John recall the scene in order to name the guests and put in the names of Lazarus and Mary and Martha! Matthew had said that '*the disciples*' rebuked the woman for wasting the ointment, and that it was poured on the head of Jesus. John says with indignant accuracy that it was Judas Iscariot who uttered the rebuke, and that, not because he cared for the poor, but '*because he was a thief*,' and kept the money-box and wanted to put something into it. He also says with more minuteness, and as a more interested observer, that it was the *feet* of Jesus which Mary balmed, — the feet of the weary traveller, — and that she wiped them with her hair, thus giving to the incident all its touching significance."

2. But let us look again at this memorable scene, and try to make it real to ourselves, as if we too were present at the "supper." Jesus had said good-by for the last time to Galilee, and had come on his final journey to Jerusalem. Instead, however, of going directly to the Holy City, he preferred, as usual, to stay in the loved home at Bethany. Here the Sabbath day — the day before the eventful Palm Sunday — had been spent in quiet, and on the evening they made him a supper. Martha, as was natural, "served" at the feast. Her brother Lazarus, with "the disciples," the immediate followers of Jesus, and the Master himself, reclined at the table, after the well-known custom of the East. We can hardly think of it as a joyous feast. To the mind of Jesus that supper-table at Bethany lay under the shadow of the cruel cross, and we cannot doubt that the images of death thronged thick and fast upon him. Perhaps, too, the disciples felt something of the same depression; for they had often heard him speak of the dark fate that awaited him at Jerusalem. Their feeling may also have been shared by the loving friends in the house, to whom they had most likely repeated the intimations of his death which Jesus had previously given to them. But this gloom that lay upon the hearts of the little company was soon to be dispersed by an act so striking and so significant that even now the simple account of it given in the Gospels thrills our souls with a sacred joy. For as Mary sat there in the presence of the beloved Master and of the brother whom he had so lately rescued from the grave, her grateful feelings could no longer be restrained. "She was not occupied, like her sister, in the active ministrations of the feast, but she sat and thought and gazed until the fire burned, and she felt impelled to some outward sign of her love, her *gratitude*, her devotion. So she arose and fetched an alabaster vase of Indian spikenard, and came softly behind Jesus, where he was reclining on the couch, and broke the alabaster in her hand, and poured the genuine precious perfume first over his head, then over his feet; and then, unconscious of every presence save his alone, she wiped those feet with the long tresses of her hair, while the atmosphere of the whole house was filled with the delicious fragrance." (Farrar.)

3. Before the Master could express his appreciation of the beautiful act, voices were heard muttering that such a lavish outpouring of costly ointment was a wicked waste of money. "Why," exclaimed Judas, "was it not sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" Jesus at once perceived the whole situation. He saw not only that Mary's noble act of gratitude had been misjudged, and an undeserved rebuke given to her pure and disinterested love, but also that Judas, who had spoken, cared nothing for the poor, and had only given

expression to the avarice of a mean and sordid soul. But with perfect gentleness and entire repose of manner, in words that had no sting even for the unworthy disciple who was so soon to betray him, Jesus said to the company: "Why are you troubling her? It is a noble and beautiful deed that she has done in my honor. The poor whom I have taught you to help will always be with you; but I am soon to be taken from you." And then, as if the full sense of his own lonely and fearful fate had suddenly overpowered him, he added the impressive words: "This anointing is to prepare me for my burial. Truly it is a worthy symbol of the love which is leading me to the cross. And wherever in after ages this gospel of self-sacrificing love shall be preached, this loving deed of Mary shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

4. There are many things in this Gospel narrative that are worthy of notice for the lessons they convey or imply. But let us confine our attention to the single duty of gratitude to benefactors, so admirably illustrated by the act of Mary in anointing the feet of Jesus. Gratitude, whether expressed in words or in deeds, is a virtue which springs from pure love. To thank one who has done us any service, or to render him a like service in return, for the sake of keeping his good will, and so perhaps inducing him to confer still greater benefits upon us, is an act not of gratitude, but of mere worldly prudence. That which makes gratitude a Christian virtue is the motive which prompts it. In Mary's character the most prominent feature was her power of loving, her capacity of self-devotion. Jesus saw how genuine and how fervent was this love; and though he might have counselled a less costly expression of it, he had nothing but admiration and praise for her "chivalrous deed." He had been her friend, her benefactor, her spiritual guide. While he sought no return for his gracious ministries, he yet welcomed every sign that the spirit which animated his life was awakened and active in the lives of those around him.

5. Jesus shared the common feeling which makes it natural for one to say, "I love to be loved." We must indeed try to do all the good we can to others, whether they show us any gratitude or not. But ingratitude in any one is as base as it is unnatural. For if we but will to do so we can always express in some way our grateful sense of the benefits we have received. Children are taught that it is rude not to say "Thank you" when anything, no matter how small, is given to them. Yet it is not uncommon for children to grow out of this habit, and to get into the way of taking what others do for them as a matter of course that calls for no thanks. Too many people allow themselves to become forgetful of acknowledging favors. Where a poor memory and not a selfish heart is the cause of this, it might be well to adopt the rule of a good man who kept in his diary what he called "a memorial of acts of kindness." "As memory," he said, "is liable to fail, and as the kindness and friendship of former times may be forgotten, I thus preserve the remembrance of friendly offices done to myself or to my family, that I may repay the debt in grateful acknowledgments while I live, and that my family after me may know to whom their father owed obligations, and feel every debt of gratitude due by him as obligations on themselves."

6. Like charity, gratitude should with every one "begin at home." "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!" Yet many a child that is not thankless is apt to forget to cultivate the virtue of gratitude. For gratitude goes far beyond the mere saying of "Thank you." It means, above all, the return of kindness for kindness, of love for love. Look again at the example of Mary, who won such praise from Jesus, and whose name has ever since been held in blessed memory. Jesus had done for her and for her family all that a wise and loving friend could do. He had helped them in their sore distress, brought them sympathy and comfort, and more than all else had taught them the way of eternal life. For benefits so lavish and so precious Mary doubtless felt that nothing she could ever do would be a fit return. But one thing she could do. She could show that she loved the Master, who had first loved her. And so, without counting

the cost, she poured upon his tired feet her cruse of costly perfume as a token and an emblem of her heart's affection.

7. Gratitude, then, may well be called the fairest blossom that springs from the soul of man, — a blossom that is never fairer than when it comes from the good ground of a young heart. For how much the young have to be grateful for! The affection and care of parents, the daily comforts of home, the opportunities for gaining knowledge, the guidance in virtue, the helps to the attainment of that heavenly wisdom whose price is above rubies, — can any child ever render to his earthly benefactors a full and adequate return for blessings so numerous and of such inestimable value? Something, however, he may do each day to show forth a grateful love. He may be obedient and helpful to those whose love is ever as a sun and a shield about his path. He may repay in kind what he cannot hope to pay in degree, — the love that is lavished upon him in so many ways; and best of all, he may show his gratitude for benefits conferred upon himself by conferring benefits upon others. When the kindness of others makes us more kind, when their love increases ours, and their goodness incites us to a life of good deeds, then does gratitude put on its fairest dress, and its beauty becomes as an enduring memorial.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. When did the event happen which is related in this lesson-passage? Note on ver. 6.
2. Where did it happen?
3. Who was the woman mentioned in ver. 7? Note.
4. What was an "alabaster cruse"? Note.
5. What kind of ointment did Mary use? Note.
6. How much was it worth?
7. Who was it, according to John's Gospel, that cried out against the waste? Note on ver. 8.
8. Explain ver. 10. Note.
9. Explain ver. 12. Note.
10. Explain ver. 13. Note.
11. How many accounts of this anointing are given in the Gospels? § 1.
12. Which is the most accurate?
13. Tell the story in your own words. § 2.
14. What did Jesus think of the question of Judas? § 3.
15. How did he reply to it? § 3.
16. What is the lesson that is here taught? § 4.
17. What is it to be grateful?
18. What did a good man do, so that he would *remember* to be grateful? § 5, last part.
19. How much have children to be thankful for? § 7.
20. What are the *best ways* in which they can show their gratitude? § 7, last part.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. How many different accounts of this anointing do we find in the Gospels? § 1.
2. In what particulars is the account of John's Gospel the most accurate? § 1.
3. According to that Gospel, when and where did the anointing take place? Note on ver. 6.
4. Explain the details given in ver. 7. Note.
5. Explain ver. 10. Note.
6. Explain the phrase, "*to prepare me for burial*," in ver. 12. Note.
7. What is meant by the term "*this gospel*" as used in ver. 13? Note.
8. Give a paraphrase of this story of the anointing. § 2.
9. Show what was the attitude of Jesus toward Judas on this occasion. § 3.
10. What meaning did Jesus attach to the act of Mary? § 3, last part.
11. What is true gratitude, and what is the motive that prompts one to be grateful? § 4.
12. Illustrate by the example of Mary. § 4.
13. What is a common excuse for forgetting to be thankful for the benefits that we receive? § 5.
14. How may this forgetfulness be cured?
15. Show how sincere gratitude to one's benefactor is illustrated by the example of Mary. § 6.
16. How may gratitude be shown to parents? § 7.
17. What are the *best ways* of showing forth our gratitude to those who have benefited us?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The differences in the various accounts of this anointing. 2. The element of disinterestedness in true gratitude. 3. How gratitude to benefactors who are dead may find expression.

LESSON XVIII.

NOT PEACE, BUT A SWORD.

Matt. x. 34–39.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. — Matt. x. 34.

THE MEANING.

Verse 34. This is one of the "hard sayings" of the Gospels. It was spoken to the twelve Apostles when they were sent forth on their public ministry. But it is said to every disciple of Jesus now. The truth always "sends a sword," — that is, those who accept it must be like soldiers who draw their swords and march against the foe. The word translated "*to send*" means literally "to cast;" and we may think of the farmer casting seed into the ground. The truth-bringer sows seed from which strife and conflict will spring up. This is the divine law working in human life, and is just as true to-day as ever. One who stands up "on the Lord's side" for right and truth will meet with opposition.

Verse 35. A quotation from Micah vii. 6. Jesus knew that the gospel of glad tidings which he brought would be accepted by some and opposed by others in the same family; and as his mission was to preach the gospel whether men believed in him or opposed him, so in this bold form of speech he could say, *I came to set men at variance.*

Verse 37. This "hard saying" does not mean that one may not or should not love father and mother and brother and sister with a very great degree of love. What is meant is that this kind of affection must not *take the place* of love to Christ, — the love of the right and the true. Those who are the most Christ-like in their spirit will always be the *best* fathers and mothers and the best brothers and sisters.

Verse 38. Punishment by putting to death on the cross was a Roman custom, and the Jews in the time of Christ must have become sadly familiar with it. To us, bearing one's cross means what the Apostle calls enduring *what is hard* "as a good soldier of Christ." It is often very hard to be on the side of right when that is not the popular side; hard to contend against many of the evils that afflict the world. But the true disciple must follow Jesus, who was willing to endure even the shame and the pain of a real cross from his love of right and his love of man.

Verse 39. This verse contains what is called a *paradox*. The word "life" has here two different meanings. There is a lower life and a higher life for every human being. He that saves his earthly life, or anything that belongs to it, by unfaithfulness to the higher life of righteousness and holiness, loses — that is, does not gain — that higher life and its blessings. On the other hand, he who "seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," though he may lose some earthly things and even the earthly life itself, will gain the higher life which can never be lost.

THE TEACHING.

1. JESUS spoke a most serious and solemn word to his twelve Apostles, those humble peasants and fishermen of Galilee, whom he sent forth as sheep going into the midst of wolves. It was as if he had said: "Think of me not as one who has come to cast peace on the earth, as a sower casts his seed into the ground. The truth I am sowing is rather like a sword. Those who will receive the truth are like men who see their leader's flashing blade, and straightway rally to serve under his banner; while those who are enemies to the truth are like men that draw their swords and enter the opposing ranks. These consequences of teaching the truth I cannot prevent. Men who love darkness will resent the coming in of light. The evil-minded will oppose the bringers of good. Truth, which unites all those who are of the truth, will separate from the truth-lovers all who love other things more than they love the truth. So the truth which I teach, and which my Apostles will ever teach, will set at variance even those who belong to the same household. The convert to the new faith will find the bitterest hostility roused against himself from the unbelieving members of his own family. Such an one must then remember that love to me, to the truth I teach, to the divine will I declare, to the Father I reveal, is an affection whose power no human love must usurp. The love of a disciple for his kindred must never take the place of this love of truth. Rather should this higher love exalt and intensify the rightful love of father and mother, of son and daughter. Let it keep the disciple faithful even unto death, that he may find the way of sacrifice the way to heaven, and the earthly cross that he has nobly borne the price of an everlasting crown. For it is the eternal law of life that they who think they have found life in low and unworthy pursuits are losers of that which they sought; while those who for my sake, in unselfish devotion to truth and righteousness, have been ready to yield up even life itself, with all its precious belongings, will have found the life that is an immortal inheritance, and that can never be taken from them."

2. In this paraphrase of our lesson-passage, its harder sayings are sufficiently explained. We do not need in our present study to dwell at length upon any of its special statements. Rather let us try to make out and bring home to our minds and hearts the moral teaching of its leading phrase: "A sword, not peace." In former lessons we have learned what Christ demands of his disciples in the way of mercy, of justice, of charitable judgment, of tenderness, consideration and forbearance, of forgiveness, of a peaceable temper, of a loving sympathy extended even to one's enemies, and of a gentle courtesy in the midst of a thoughtless world. The Christian who exemplifies these virtues and graces of a holy character may be likened to the leaven, which slowly but surely leavens the whole lump in which it has been placed. Many a disciple thus manifests Christ to the world. We all know men and women — yes, and children, too — who make the world better and happier simply by their being in it. "As we live with them, a breath as of sweet and strange and unknown odors steals from their souls to ours. A soft and holy grace plays about their presence, calms us when they are near, draws us closer and closer to their confidence, and speaks of peace, of purity, and of every lovely thing. How tender and gracious and lowly and unselfish is all their activity! How prevailing, how persuasive, is their goodness!"

3. But this is only one side of the Christlike character. Open the Gospels, and see on their pictured pages other symbols than those of the leaven and the mustard-seed. "There is a world of imagery taken from light, from fire, from salt, from the sword, — from things that flash and glitter and smite." God's truth, like his sunshine, sometimes scorches and burns. Like the fire, it consumes the "hay and wood and stubble" of things unworthy to endure. Like salt, it eats away what is corrupt, that it may save what is sound. Like the sword, it cuts its way through the serried ranks of sin. There is light in it, cheering, purifying, beautiful. But there is also heat in it, — a holy heat that kindles about order and law and

truth and right, and puts up a barrier of flaming indignation to keep the oppressor from his victim, the despoiler from his prey.

4. Thus Christianity bids its disciples arm for the fight against evil, and go forth as knight-errant champions for truth and right. They must bear each one his cross; but they must also carry every one his good sword, his "trenchant blade." There is not only a life-long battle that each man must wage against his personal temptations and the sins that so easily and so persistently beset his own soul, but there is also a life-long warfare to which he is summoned against the evils that are in the world, and that are actively arrayed against the innocent, the weak, the poor, and the helpless, as well as against the good and the true. So long as these evils exist, the Christian disciple must contend against them. He must do his part to put down the cruelties and brutalities, the wicked selfishness, the heartless sensuality, the reckless ambition, and all the countless evils that are so many forms of man's "inhumanity to man." Unless he enlists "for the war" in the ranks of those who are actively on the Lord's side, he is not worthy to be a follower of him who whipped from the Temple the unscrupulous traders; who by the stern invectives of his holy indignation against the religious leaders of his time, — the men who bound heavy burdens on the shoulders of their weaker brethren, and devoured widows' houses, and in their hearts were full of all uncleanness, — made the Pharisee a mockery and a byword to all after ages; and who, even while the tears of a tender love fell from his eyes as he wept over Jerusalem, did not hesitate to denounce upon the Holy City the most terrible judgment for its sins.

5. The illustrations of our lesson from the history of the Christian ages are as a great "cloud of witnesses." Ever since Christ walked our earth there has been in the world an "enthusiasm of humanity," through which men have become devoted lovers and helpers of their race. But there has also been an intense "enthusiasm for righteousness," a burning horror of evil, inspiring the heroic deeds of countless Christian souls. The progress of the world has cost the lives of a great and noble army of martyrs. In every age the weak and helpless have found protectors, the wrongs of the oppressed have been avenged, and the victims of man's cruelty and brutality have been set free. When St. Paul carried the Gospel to Athens and to Rome, a most degrading and revolting kind of public amusement was everywhere common, — the bloody combats of the gladiators. Neither pagan laws nor the statutes of the Christian emperors could abolish the iniquity. But one day, at the beginning of the fifth century, a brave Christian monk, Telemachus, went to the amphitheatre, and when the gladiators were fighting, leaped into the arena and interposed between them. Then falling on his knees he appealed to the people to renounce forever such cruel pastimes. The enraged multitude answered the monk's appeal by stoning him to death. But the self-devotion of Telemachus gained its reward in the speedy suppression of those brutal sports which had so long held their place, and had caused the deaths of so many human victims.

6. In the Middle Ages the Christian knight took a vow to protect the distressed, and to maintain right against might. Let the scholar read, in Tennyson's poems or in "The Boys' King Arthur," the brave deeds of these heroes of the age of chivalry. But let him also find on the pages of modern history the records of knights as brave and true as any that ever sat about the Round Table of old. The men who have denounced and assailed the wrongs and cruelties of the nineteenth century are as worthy of honor and imitation as any heroes of the past. The lives of reformers like Wilberforce in England and Garrison in our own country, who labored for the freedom of the slave, should be studied by every one who would see how, even in this late day of Christian progress, active wickedness and insolent evil have called not for peace, but for a sword. And there is still a moral warfare going on, which challenges every noble-minded boy and every true-hearted girl to do all they can by word and by deed to put down all forms of wrong, all evil customs that hurt men's souls, all kinds of cruelty, — all the things, in short,

that war against truth and right and human well-being.

7. Something of this moral warfare comes into the every-day life of the young. The cowardly big boy who attacks a smaller and weaker one on the playground or in the street, must be kept from injuring his victim. The evil habit which threatens harm to all that are exposed to its influence must be denounced. Active wickedness of every kind must be met by aggressive goodness. The manly and the womanly scholar will always be willing to "stand up and be counted" on the side of justice, of purity, of temperance, and of mercy.

8. Only let it be kept in mind that the tenderest and purest and most compassionate souls are the souls that will be moved to utter the deserved rebuke, and will be all aflame with righteous indignation when the cruel wrong or shameful crime is committed. It was the Prince of Peace who said, "I am come to bring a sword," and we read in the Book of Revelation of the "wrath of the *Lamb*." I wish this lesson might be illustrated for every Sunday-school scholar by photographs of two famous pictures. One of these is Raphael's painting of the Archangel Michael, who, hovering on his poised wings and holding his lance in both hands, sets one foot on the Dragon (the symbol of evil), which writhes upward and turns upon its conqueror a last gaze of malignant rage and despair. In the angel's beautiful face there is neither vengeance nor disdain; but he looks upon his fallen foe with a calm and serious brow. He has smitten evil into powerless ruin, but he has done it in the service of humanity and from the love of God. The other picture, also by Raphael, represents the avenging angel driving the robber Heliodorus from the Temple (as told in the third chapter of the Book of Maccabees). Swiftly and surely the heavenly warrior rides down upon the insolent intruder. But not in anger or wrath does he come. We almost seem to see in his radiant countenance the divine pity which is always the source of the truest justice. In such a temper and prompted by such a spirit let every protector of the weak, every deliverer of the oppressed, every champion of the wronged, go forth to do battle for the right.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

The servants of the Lord should be as bold for their Master as the servants of Evil are for theirs. — COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

Have we flashed in upon the dark and cruel habitations of this world with the splendor of the warrior angel, to succor the oppressed and to bid the captive go free? — REV. H. S. HOLLAND.

Take thy part in suffering hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. — 2 TIM. ii. 3.

Fight the good fight of the faith. — 1 TIM. vi. 12.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. — EPH. vi. 17.

Gird Thou our souls, O God of might,
To battle for the true and right;
And give us that Damascan blade
Of faith and moral courage made.

REV. W. P. TILDEN.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What did Jesus say he did not come to bring? Ver. 34.
2. Repeat the angels' "Christmas Song" in Luke ii. 14.
3. What is Jesus sometimes called? ANS. *The Prince of Peace.*
4. Explain, then, in your own words what you think the Golden Text of this lesson can mean. (Read note to ver. 34 and the first part of § 1.)
5. Explain ver. 35. Note.
6. Tell first what ver. 37 does *not* mean. Note.
7. What, then, is meant by that verse? Note.
8. What people in the times of Christ used the punishment of putting to death on a cross? Note on ver. 38.
9. What is it for us to bear our cross? Note.

10. Which is the higher life, that of the body or that of the soul?
11. Which life will last the longer?
12. If one tries to keep the life of the body by doing things that are wrong, how will that affect the life of the soul? Note.
13. Read John ii. 13–16, and tell what you think of the action of Jesus.
14. What can a boy do sometimes to put a stop to a deed that is mean and cowardly? § 7, second sentence.
15. Tell the story of the monk Telemachus. § 5.
16. Tell something about the *Knights of the Round Table.* § 6.
17. Who was Wilberforce, and what did he do?
18. What noble work did Garrison do?
19. Describe one or both of the pictures mentioned in § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Explain the meaning of the Golden Text. Note and paraphrase in § 1.
2. Explain ver. 35. Note and paraphrase in § 1.
3. Explain ver. 37. Note and paraphrase in § 1.
4. To what Roman custom does ver. 38 refer?
5. How may *we* bear our cross?
6. What is a "paradox"?
7. Explain the paradox in ver. 39. Note and paraphrase in § 1.
8. In what sense may the Christian be said to resemble leaven? § 2.
9. What is the *other* side of the Christlike character mentioned in § 3?
10. Explain the metaphors given in § 3.
11. What are the two kinds of moral warfare in which each one of us must engage? § 4.
12. In what way did Jesus attack the evils that he encountered? § 4, last part.
13. Give examples of moral heroism from Christian history.
14. Tell the story of Telemachus given in § 5.
15. What was the institution of Christian Knighthood in the Middle Ages, and what did it accomplish?
16. Mention some modern reformers who have been as brave in opposing evil as were the mediæval knights.
17. How can young people be like them in their every-day life? § 7.
18. Show how compassion and tenderness are compatible with a holy indignation against wrong and the doers of wrong.
19. Describe the pictures mentioned in § 8.
20. What lesson do those pictures enforce?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. What is meant by the phrase, "the wrath of the Lamb"? 2. What are righteous wars? 3. Specify some evils in modern society against which the Christian should contend.

LESSON XIX.

COURTESY.

Luke xiv. 7–11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. — Luke xiv. 11.

THE MEANING.

Verse 7. "*They chose out the chief rooms.*" We learn from ver. 1 of this chapter that Jesus had accepted an invitation to a Sabbath dinner at the house of a Pharisee of high social position. When the time came for going to the table he witnessed the disgraceful struggle of the guests, each one trying to get the best place. The "chief rooms," or rather, as the Revised Version translates it, "chief seats," were the places of honor around the table. The Jews in the time of Christ *reclined* at table, after the fashion of the Greeks and Romans. Around each table were three couches, each for three persons. The chief or highest seat was the highest place on the highest couch.

Verse 8. "*Sit not down,*" etc. These words imply that the common practice was for the guests to seat themselves. Then, as we learn from Matt. xxii. 11, the host came in "to see the guests."

Verse 10. The word translated "worship" should be rendered "honor," or, as in the Revised Version, "glory." All the other guests would give honor to one who, having chosen for himself a humble place, was afterward shown by the host to a higher seat.

THE TEACHING.

1. It will repay us well to pause for a moment, midway in these studies of Christ's ethical teachings, and note the fact that he who has sought to fix our gaze on those *great duties* "that shine aloft as stars" — justice and mercy, forgiveness and sympathy, truthfulness and love — has a word also to say to us about the simple *courtesies of life*, — those "small, sweet charities" that help to make a happy world, whether in the home or in society. Some one has said, "Jesus cared for everything that was worth caring for." Too many moral teachers are like architects who are so intent on building into their structures the solid and necessary materials that they slight those graces of style and ornament that make the exterior of the house attractive; or like landscape-painters who are so taken up with the hills and the sky that are to fill the background and upper portion of their picture, that they seem scarcely to notice the flowers that make the meadows gay, and the gleam and sparkle of the running brooks, — those nearer beauties of the landscape, that give us such delight when we walk through the smiling fields. Not such an architect of spiritual house-building nor such a painter of the virtues and graces of Christian character was he who told the Pharisees that they should both give heed to the weightier matters of the law — justice and mercy and faith — and yet not neglect those lesser services of their temple ritual, which, however

they might be abused, were meant to be the good manners of a genuine worship. (Matt. xxiii. 23.) So, also, in our present lesson-passage we see the same wise comprehensiveness that could turn from thoughts of duty "too deep for tears" to teachings of simple courtesy in the common intercourse of life. He who was so soon to die for mankind "was troubled when he saw the guests at a dinner eager for the most honorable seats. It offended his idea of the modesty and kindliness which ought to characterize social intercourse; and he condemned the fault in a parable."

2. To understand the meaning of this parable we must first see what it was *designed* to teach. The occasion was that of an unseemly strife at a Sabbath meal where Jesus was one of the guests. There had been a struggle to get the best seats. No restraints even of worldly prudence kept these proud and self-seeking Pharisees from trying to appropriate to themselves the places which they thought were due to their social importance. To show them the folly of such conduct, and at the same time to give them a glimpse of an important spiritual truth, Jesus relates this parable. We must therefore keep in mind both the lessons that are here taught. Discourtesy and ungentlemanly behavior are not approved even by worldly-minded people, unless they have lost all sense of what is decent and becoming. It is better at a feast to take a place that is lower than that to which you think you are entitled than to scramble for one that is higher. A host must needs arrange his guests according to his notion of their rank or position. Nobody will ever gain anything by rudely pushing himself into a place that after all he will be obliged to give up.

3. So far, in getting at the teaching of this parable, we see that it enforces a truth which men are too apt to forget; namely, that the eager longing to get ahead of others and seize the best places for one's self is not always rewarded, even in the society of those who are indifferent to the laws of the divine kingdom. But this truth is only the transparent veil of a higher law. Just as in the processes of Nature we find hints of spiritual truths, so in this counsel of Jesus concerning proper behavior at such feasts as his immediate hearers would be likely to attend, he suggests to those who could catch the deeper meaning of his words that there is an ideal society "in which humility is held in honor, and pride gets a downsetting." That ideal society is symbolized here, as elsewhere, under the emblem of a marriage-feast. It is the sacred brotherhood of the kingdom of heaven on earth. From every feast of this Christian fraternity jealousy and conflict will be absent. Each will seek the other's happiness. No worldly pride will assert the claims of exalted privilege; no spirit of self-seeking incite to rude behavior. But from that true *courtesy of the heart* which is closely allied to genuine love, will spring the purest courtesy in outward conduct.

4. Courtesy comes from the wish, born of brotherly love, to scatter joy and not pain around us. It makes men polite, because politeness is the language of a courteous spirit, however freely it may be used by those who employ it for the worldly advantages that it gives. The *gentleman* will have gentle manners; but much gentleness of heart is sometimes unaccompanied by "the ways of polite society." Courtesy put on as a varnish to a selfish nature shows, sooner or later, the reality beneath. "People who pass outwardly for gentlemen and ladies are often very selfish, and when they can do so without a breach of etiquette, show it very plainly in their action." True courtesy, therefore, — the courtesy of a Christian gentleman, — is an inward spirit of thoughtful love making itself felt in the outward behavior. The grace of manners that comes from education, from contact with good society, is not to be despised. But no social discipline will ever cure a child or a man of that hateful spirit of self-assertion which is the secret fountain of discourtesy; while on the other hand, the child or the adult who has a tender, gentle, and unselfish *heart*, has the essential qualities of a gentleman, however little he may have learned of social etiquette or polished manners.

5. There are many beautiful stories illustrating true courtesy. One is that which is

told of Louis XIV. of France, who once began to tell an amusing story to his courtiers, when he suddenly gave the story a different turn, which made it end very tamely. One of the princes soon after left the room, when the king said: "The narrative I was telling reflected severely on that prince's father, and I thought it far better to spoil a good story than distress a worthy man." Another is that which is related of a lady, one of whose guests at dinner had never seen finger-bowls before, and so, being thirsty, drank from one. The hostess immediately lifted her own finger-bowl and drank from it, making some pleasant remark, as she did so, on the beauty of the bowl; so that her guest, who might have been mortified at his blunder, was saved from such distress by the lady's thoughtful and kind-hearted courtesy. An excellent story, teaching the beauty of true courtesy in the home life of children, is told in EVERY OTHER SUNDAY, vol. i. no. 7, under the title "Only a Sister."

6. Courtesy is a fundamental law of *home* intercourse. In his excellent book on *Home Life*, — a book that every Sunday school scholar ought some time to read, — Rev. John F. W. Ware thus states and explains this law: —

"Good manners and kind feelings should not be company graces, but *home* graces. Most, of all places, home depends upon 'the small, sweet charities;' least of all can it do without those common civilities which are prized so highly in the transient intercourse of life. Coleridge says: 'The happiness of life is made up of minute fractions, — the little soon-forgotten charities of a kiss or a smile, a kind look, a heart-felt compliment, and the countless infinitesimals of pleasurable thoughts and genial feelings.' These are the things of almost infinite value in home intercourse, and these are the things home intercourse wants. Do you ask, 'What need is there of courtesy at home? Why should I stop to be polite to those I am with all the time? They ought to know that I feel kindly toward them, to take that for granted, and not to mind the little oversights in manner and act.' But *home cannot do this*. Its life rests on little things. Because it knows you love, it demands the expression of it. The decay of courtesy in families, the absence of ordinary civility toward each other, the suspension of little charities, is something worse than a carelessness. Intermit the pleasant interchanges of the heart, be polite and considerate to strangers and in the home leave every one to themselves; . . . leave your sisters to fight their way while you flirt with other girls; or lavish your amiability and your accomplishments upon all except your brothers, — and home is little more than a name and verges fast toward a ruin."

The true way in which to think of courtesy at home is to regard it as a form of the *service* we owe one to another. For it has well been said by the author of "Laws of Christ for Common Life:" "By gentleness of manner, by an unobtrusive sympathy, by thoughtfulness for others in little things, we may smooth the roughnesses of life for those with whom we live, soothe their vexations, and contribute more to their real happiness than by great and signal acts of generosity."

7. The great law of Christian courtesy has been abundantly illustrated through all the Christian ages. But its highest example is seen in the life of him who diffused a spirit of sweet charity and unselfishness among men not only by what he said, but far more by what he did and what he was. We do not overlook the courage, the firmness, or the manliness of Jesus when we call him, in the words of an old English poet, —

"The best of men
That e'er wore earth about him; . . .
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit;
The first true gentleman that ever breathed."

How gentle always to the frail and erring were the rebukes of this *Friend of Sinners:* "I condemn thee not; go and sin no more!" In his answer to the men who sought to entrap him in his speech, how gracious were the words with which he silenced and confuted them! Read his conversation with the sisters at Bethany. How could reproof be given to the impatience of an over-busy spirit with more of gentleness, or praise be awarded to "high thinking" with less of flattery? The even flow of Christ's ever-present love and tender consideration for the happiness of others and allowances made for their weakness and ignorance is in marked contrast with the turbulent stream of most men's lives. His was indeed that "charity that suffereth long and is kind; that hopeth all things and endureth all things." If his spirit moulds our characters, we shall become like him in all beautiful expressions of gentleness and courtesy.

THE TEACHING.

1. Of the striking occurrence recorded in our lesson-passage, Dr. Furness well says: "There is no other scene in the history of Jesus that more truly or touchingly illustrates the tenderness of his human sensibilities and the characteristic greatness of his mind." More than this: In no other part of the four Gospels is there given us such a beautiful example of that *lowly service of a self-renouncing love*, which is the surest mark of a Christlike man. If we assume that Luke and John describe the same Supper, then it is easy to see how that final meal of the Master with his disciples began, continued, and ended. It began with an exhibition of the weakness and the unlovely spirit of the disciples. "Jesus had looked to be cheered by the presence and affection of his friends; but they hardly met before they began to dispute which should be greatest." Merely to rebuke that ambitious and quarrelsome spirit was not in keeping with the method of Jesus. As once before he had taken a little child in his arms to enforce his teaching of humility, so now he sees the need of giving his followers another and more explicit object-lesson to prepare them for future duty.

2. The occasion was quickly furnished him. After the "first cup" had been blessed and had passed round, the ceremonial of the feast required the Head of the company to rise and "wash hands." Perhaps the disciples were astonished to see their Master rise to perform one of those outward observances which he had so often taught them were needless and unmeaning to the "pure in heart." But it was not for this that Jesus left his place. There was another kind of washing, the doing of which, though it conformed to no ritual, would yet set forth, as no words could express, the condescension and the self-denying service which are the crowning virtues of Christian discipleship. And as once before "he held up a little child, to shame his followers out of ambitious passions, so now he rebukes their pride by becoming the menial of the household. He expresses the spirit and aim of his whole earthly ministry in a representative, typical act of condescension."

3. It was a happy accident, so to speak, that led Jesus to begin this foot-washing, as he probably did, with Peter; for it opened the way for him to teach other great lessons to the disciples, even while the object-lesson of lowly service was going on. This childlike man, so impulsive and impetuous, so full of contradictions in his character, — at one moment presuming to dictate to his Master, and at another prostrating himself with penitent tears at that Master's feet, — was the one of all others to draw from Jesus those sayings about washing and cleansing that were full of the deepest moral meanings: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet." As if he had said: "You must accept this service from me *for all that it signifies*, or you are not my true disciple. Only those who are willing to humble themselves and do the lowly labors that are prompted by self-sacrificing love can have any part with me. But if you *are* truly humble, if you are among those who seek only to minister, and not to be ministered unto, then you will no longer need to be *wholly* cleansed and purified, as one who requires to be bathed all over. Being already clean in heart and spirit, you will only need to consecrate your life each day to the service of love, and keep your soul free from the soil and stain that, unless you give heed, will surely come upon you, as you walk the dusty ways of a sinful world."

4. Then, when the foot-washing was ended, the Supper went on, Jesus first explaining, as was his custom, the meaning of what he had done. The other sayings and doings of that ever-memorable Supper — the solemn talk over the bread and the wine, as if already Jesus saw his own broken body and flowing blood on the bitter cross, the words and acts of the betrayer, and the discourse and prayers of Jesus which John records — do not come within the scope of our present study.

5. What concerns us here is the simple but by no means easy lesson which is taught us in this act of Jesus washing his disciples' feet, and in the words with which he himself explained its meaning. It is, indeed, a very simple lesson. We are to serve and help others, even those who may be of humbler estate than ourselves; and this we are to do, not seeking any return for ourselves, but out of a pure and disinterested love. We are still further to be willing to do lowly acts, even "servile labors," if by so doing we can minister to the wants of those about us. However much we may humble ourselves, we can never condescend so far as did the blessed Master when he stooped to wash the disciples' feet. But why do we call this condescension? Is there any other way in which true greatness shows itself more clearly than in gracious actions to those who are lowly and obscure? The story is told of Thomas Aquinas, by far the greatest man of his age, though he had voluntarily taken the position of a lowly monk, that one day a stranger arriving at Bologna asked the prior of the monastery for some one to help him carry a basket of provisions. "Tell the first brother you meet," said the prior. Saint Thomas was walking in meditation in the cloister, when the stranger, not knowing him, said, "Your prior bids you follow me." Without a word the holy man and illustrious scholar bowed his head, took the basket, and, though suffering from lameness, followed the stranger and carried his heavy basket, even submitting to be reproved for not keeping up with him. History is full of such examples of a Christlike and condescending spirit. But we do not need to read any books to learn of those who humble themselves to help those who are beneath them. In every good home the father and the mother are continually condescending to those who are dependent upon them, doing a thousand little acts of lowly service that sometimes children feel too proud to do for others.

6. Such lowly labors, though the world may affect to despise them, and foolishly indulged children may grow up to think themselves above them, are yet often honored, and those that perform them placed high on the roll of the "Saints of God." One city in Italy, the city of Lucca, the great Italian poet Dante mentions in his immortal poem, not to say a word of her warriors or her nobles, but just to speak of a woman who once lived there and who all her life long was "only a servant-of-all-work." This was Saint Zita, honored by the Church of Rome as a woman whose name was worthy of being placed by the side of Saint Catherine and Saint Cecilia and hundreds of other noble Christian women. And all for what? Merely because she was faithful to her humble duties as a serving-maid, and performed her lowly labors with a single heart, without a murmur against her lowly lot, and out of her poverty still feeding the hungry who were about her.

7. Such saints there still are; and in a "naughty world" their lives of humble toil put our foolish pride to shame, and show us how all true service ranks the same with God; teaching our haughty spirits that

> "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
> Makes that and th' action fine."

Each one of us, scholars, can at least do as much as this. We can imitate the example of him who washed the feet of his disciples, and by lowly service in our daily lives do something to make a heaven on earth. If we *know* these things, happy shall we be if we *do* them.

8. With this lesson, we come to the end of the first division of the Teachings of Jesus,—those that refer to the duties which we owe to others. We began in Lesson I. with that great idea of Jesus,—his idea of man as SON *and* BROTHER,—which is the keynote of all his teachings. Only as we keep in mind that central truth of Christianity shall we be able to do the hard tasks which are set before us in the requirements of self-forgetful, self-humbling love. If we realize that we are sons of God, we shall be willing to strive so to live as to be worthy of that divine sonship. If we truly *love* our brother-man, we shall be ready to labor for him in all lowliness and patience and with a steadfast faith. Our love will be long-suffering, as was our Master's; it will even endure

unto the end, as did his. And whenever, in the lowly valley of our narrow lives, we are tempted to lose heart and hope, we shall renew our strength and gain fresh courage as we look to Jesus, who humbled himself to the death of the cross, and has been exalted to "the right hand of the throne of God."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

If for anything he loved greatness, it was because therein he might exercise his goodness. — SIR P. SIDNEY.

Humility is a virtue that for all her lowliness commandeth the souls it stoops to. — MOORE.

Condescend to them that are lowly. — ROM. xii. 16.

We then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. — ROM. xv. 1.

The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. — MARK x. 42.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What was the "*Supper*" mentioned in ver. 2?
2. Who was the betrayer of Jesus? Ver. 2.
3. What do you think this ver. 2 means?
4. Tell what you can about the events of this Supper, as described in note on ver. 4.
5. What seat at the table did Peter probably take? Note to ver. 6.
6. What does ver. 10 mean? Note.
7. What do the words "Master" and "Lord" mean, in ver. 13? Note.
8. What, according to Luke, happened at the beginning of this Supper? Luke xxii. 24, and also § 1.
9. What was expected of the Head of the feast, after the "first cup" had passed round? § 2.
10. What, instead of this, did Jesus actually do? § 2.
11. Tell what you understand of the conversation between Peter and Jesus. § 3.
12. What are the two simple lessons taught us by the act of Jesus in washing the disciples' feet? § 5.
13. Tell the story of Saint Thomas Aquinas. § 5.
14. Did you ever know of any one who did like that?
15. Tell the story of Saint Zita. § 6.
16. In what ways can children do "lowly service"?
17. What did we once learn was the "keynote" of the teachings of Jesus? § 8.
18. How can that idea help us to humble ourselves and labor patiently for others?
19. Give in your own words the substance of the last sentence in § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Give the substance of the *Special Note.*
2. Explain ver. 1. Note.
3. Give the correct translation of the first part of ver. 2.
4. What does the rest of ver. 2 mean? Note.
5. Describe what happened at the Supper, as it is explained in note on ver. 5.
6. Why did Jesus probably begin the foot-washing with Peter? Note on ver. 6.
7. Show how what is said of Peter in verses 7–9 corresponds to what we elsewhere learn of this disciple.
8. Explain ver. 10. Note.
9. Explain the titles given to Jesus in ver. 13. Note.
10. What sure mark of a Christlike character is illustrated by our lesson-passage? § 1.
11. What "*Supper*" was this?
12. How did it begin? § 1.
13. What did this lead Jesus to do? §§.1, 2.
14. What lessons did Jesus teach in his conversation with Peter? § 3.
15. What happened at the Supper after the foot-washing was over?
16. State in your own words the two lessons taught us by this symbolic act of Jesus. § 5.
17. Relate the story of Saint Thomas Aquinas. § 5.
18. Do you know other instances of such "condescension"?
19. Tell the story of Saint Zita of Lucca. § 6.
20. How can we "do likewise"?
21. Show the connection between Lesson I. of this Series and this Lesson XX. § 8.
22. How may the Christian disciple "take heart again" when discouraged? § 8, last sentence.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The differences in the various accounts of the Last Supper. 2. The character of Peter. 3. Condescension and menial service as *Christian* characteristics.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LESSONS XI.-XX.

FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Give the Golden Text of Lesson XI., and tell on what occasion it was spoken.
2. What are "idle words"?
3. What makes "talebearing," "gossip," and "slander" hateful?
4. What is a "judicial oath"?
5. Give reasons why we should tell the truth.
6. Tell the story of Peter's denial of Jesus.
7. Give the Second Commandment.
8. Why is *swearing* wicked?
9. Tell what Washington and Grant thought of profanity.
10. What does Jesus teach us about the right way to give alms?
11. What other ways of being charitable are there besides giving money?
12. How does *sharing* with others differ from giving them alms?
13. Give the *Golden Text* of Lesson XV.
14. Tell the parable of the "Rich Fool."
15. What is the right way to get riches and to use them?
16. Give the Fifth Commandment.
17. Why should children obey their parents?
18. How are soldiers *trained* to obey?
19. Tell the story of Mary's anointing the feet of Jesus.
20. What did Judas say of it, and how did Jesus answer him?
21. How can we best show our gratitude to our benefactors?
22. How can it be said that the "Prince of Peace" came to "bring a sword"?
23. How may we bear our cross in life?
24. What can children do to oppose what is bad and wicked?
25. Give the *Golden Text* of Lesson XIX.
26. State the occasion on which it was spoken, and give the parable in which it occurs.
27. Define and illustrate *Christian courtesy*.
28. What lowly act did Jesus perform at the Last Supper?
29. What lesson is taught us by that act?
30. How can we render "lowly service" to others?

FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. How are men justified and condemned by their *words*?
2. How does "gossip" lead to slander?
3. How may we keep ourselves from evil-speaking?
4. What are the objections to "judicial oaths"?
5. What are the reasons for truth-telling drawn from considerations of utility?
6. Why is it our "bounden duty" *always* to speak the truth?
7. How had the Jewish people been led to use oaths?
8. Why are all forms of profanity wrong?
9. What is the only safe rule with regard to the use of impure language?
10. What do we learn from the Old Testament about charity among the Jews?
11. How is charity a test of religion?
12. What is the right method of alms-giving?
13. Relate the parable of the "Rich Fool."
14. State in your own words Christ's doctrine of wealth.
15. What are some of the moral dangers that attend the pursuit and possession of riches?
16. How did the vow *Corban* enable men to evade the Fifth Commandment?
17. Why is obedience rightfully claimed by parents?
18. What is the value of *trained habits* of obedience?
19. Relate the story of the anointing of Jesus by Mary.
20. Tell how Jesus rebuked Judas and commended Mary.

21. What is true gratitude, and how is it best shown forth?
22. How does Christianity "bring a sword"?
23. What is it to bear one's cross?
24. How should Christians oppose moral evils?
25. Relate the parable given in Luke xiv. 7–11.
26. What is the obvious, and what the implied, teaching of this parable?
27. What is the *essence* of Christian courtesy?
28. Give the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet.
29. What two lessons are taught us by that symbolic act?
30. How is Lesson XX. connected with Lesson I.?

NOTE. — A judicious selection from these Review Questions might be used for a *written* examination.

LESSON XXI.

SELF-LOVE.

Luke x. 27; Luke xv. 17; Matt. xvi. 26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose or forfeit *his own self?* — Luke ix. 25.

THE MEANING.

Luke x. 27. This law or commandment is given in the Old Testament in Deut. vi. 5 and Lev. xix. 18. It is also found again in the New Testament, in James ii. 6, where it is called the "*Royal Law.*" The student should read this commandment here in connection with the preceding verse. Jesus answers the question of the "lawyer" who had asked what he should do to have eternal life, by getting the lawyer to repeat the "two great commandments." In these commandments we find the three kinds of duties that we must discharge in order to be true children of God, — our duties to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves.

Luke xv. 17. This verse is part of the story of the Prodigal Son. It marks the turning-point in the career of the sinful wanderer. As then he came to *himself*, so before he had gone away from himself. What we call his self-indulgence did not proceed from self-love, but from self-neglect. Had he been true to himself, had he loved himself, as a son of God, a prince of the Divine Royal Family, he would never have so far forgotten himself as to fall into bondage to a foreign master and become the companion of brutes.

Matt. xvi. 26. This verse should first be read in both the Common Version and the Revised Version, and then be compared with the corresponding verse in Luke (chap. ix. 25), as it is rendered in the Revised Version. The preceding verse teaches the great duty of self-sacrifice, or the giving up of self. But in this 26th verse the equally important duty of caring for the true self is strongly stated. The self that we are required to give up, that is, to devote, to others — to family or country, to the cause of freedom or of justice or of religion — is of such infinite worth that we must do nothing to lower its value. The whole world is too cheap a price to exchange for it. In the story of the Temptation of Jesus (Matt. iv. 1–11) the offer of "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" is made to Jesus, who spurns the tempter and says to him, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and *Him only shalt thou serve.*" To forfeit the "self," or "soul," by the consecration of which to high ends a man best serves God, is to lose that without which life is not worth having, not even if one were in possession of the whole world.

THE TEACHING.

1. In the preceding twenty lessons of this series we have been studying some of the teachings of Jesus concerning our duties to our fellow-men. Such teachings have a directly practical value. Conduct, or our actions as they affect our fellow-creatures, is well said to be "three fourths of life;" and we need therefore to learn very early in our lives the rules of right conduct. This part of religion may be called the side that at the present time is

most popular. The saint of to-day is of the order of the "Good Samaritan." If we question the best poetry, the best fiction, the best preaching, even the best science, so far as science has anything to say about human life, and ask what is man's chief duty, the answer will be, "To love his neighbor, and do all the good he can in the world." The same idea is conveyed in Edward Everett Hale's motto for the Harry Wadsworth Clubs, —

> "Look out, and not in;
> And lend a hand."

2. This "enthusiasm of humanity" is certainly a great improvement on the spiritual selfishness which once led men to quit the world, forget everybody but themselves, and pass their lives in a long routine of useless and often hideous self-torture. It is far nobler also than the feeling which prompts a man to "get religion" that he may merely save his own soul, and to flee to the church as to an ark of safety, that he may hide himself there from a wicked world that is fast going to destruction. But the religious hermit and the salvationist had both got hold of a great and important duty, — the duty that is taught us in the "Second Commandment": "Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself*." Unless there is such a thing as a righteous self-love, this "Second Commandment," which Jesus said is like unto the First, has no meaning. For it is not the vague general precept, Love thy neighbor; but a definite and specific command to each human being to love his fellow-man as if that "neighbor" were really himself, worthy therefore of as much affection, regard, and love as a man may bestow upon himself.

3. The teaching implied in the Second Commandment is distinctly given in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The blessed life of the prodigal began when he "came to himself." "These words," observes Archbishop Trench, "'*he came to himself*,' are words of deepest significance, saying, as they do, that to come to one's self and to come to God are one and the same thing." It is man in union with God, man in whom the divine and the human unite, that is the "self," which may be loved, and in the service of which we are set free from the degrading bondage of sin. To find a good word that will fitly express the love of this true self is no easy matter. Selfishness is not the word; yet Phillips Brooks does well in reminding us that "he has thought very little who has not discovered two things concerning selfishness: first, that there is a lofty selfishness, a high care for our own culture, which is a duty and not a fault; and secondly, that he who in this highest way cares for himself and seeks for himself his own best good must, whether he thinks of doing it or not, help other men's development as well as his own." This point Mr. Brooks admirably illustrates by the railroad which is built to the Pacific coast, from the very presence of which the prairies over which it passes receive a civilizing influence.

4. Yet this English word "selfishness," which is hardly older in our language than two hundred years, has come to mean that abuse of self-love which permits a man to do as he pleases without regard either to the welfare and happiness of others or to his own highest good. Many virtues become vices when they are carried to excess or are not restrained by other virtues. Thoughtless generosity becomes injustice; unregulated thrift, avarice; love of freedom degenerates into indolence, self-respect into pride; dishonesty is perverted love of acquisition, and mendacity perverted self-defence. In the same way self-love as a duty degenerates or is perverted into the hateful thing that we commonly call selfishness, which is the source of so much of the moral evil there is in the world.

5. Let us now try to understand in what this justifiable "self-love" consists, and what it requires of us. In a certain sense of the words it is *care for one's soul*. The thought of Jesus on this point is most correctly given in Luke ix. 25: "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his *own self?*" and the best commentary on the passage is the corresponding verse in Matthew (xvi. 26), as the Revised Version renders it: "For what shall a man be profited if he gain the whole world and forfeit *his life?*" (not his "soul," as the Common Version has it). The soul, then, for which it is

our duty to "have a care," is the living, conscious self. Of created beings man alone is this soul, this self. The life of lower natures is a constant yielding to instincts and appetites that guide and govern. Man to a large extent "directs his steps." He regulates his instinctive desires, restrains his appetites, and controls his passions. The springs of his actions are the appetites, passions, affections, and sentiments that are sufficient each to its own end. "Hunger seizes upon food, anger strikes at obstacles, pity flies to suffering, with unreflecting impulse;" but the soul, the self, keeps every impulse at its proper task, and acts on the moral rule that there is a graduated scale of excellence among our natural principles, — that some are higher and others lower, and that the welfare of each man depends upon his always following the higher principle if there is a conflict between that and one that is lower. This self, or soul, is naturally and justifiably an object of regard to each human being. He may — rather let us say he *should* — love himself, in the sense that we have now given to the word "self." He should strive to "unfold his appointed life," and seek his own best good. It is this which Shakspeare had in mind when he made one of his characters say, "To thine own self be true," and another declare that "Self-love is not so vile a sin as self-neglecting."

6. Self-love bids us take care of our bodies, and cultivate our minds and hearts. It will also keep every part of our nature in its proper place. In the natural order of our powers the mind was made to be master, the body was made to be servant. Selfishness reverses this order, and makes the mind the servant of the body. The selfish man pampers his appetites. He contrives devices for making them stronger. More and more he thinks of "what he shall eat and what he shall drink." He becomes a glutton and a wine-bibber. A young man who was in the habit of eating too much was once rebuked by an older friend. He replied: "My body is my own; I am doing no harm to others." "No," was his friend's wise answer; "your body is not your own to abuse. God gave it to you to take care of, that it might be the temple of His own Spirit." A boy who was tempted to injure his body was asked, "What were you afraid of? There was no one to see you." "*I* was there to see myself," he answered, "and I should be ashamed to see myself doing a wrong to myself." When a person is actuated by a true self-love, he will use his body, which has been so "fearfully and wonderfully made," to minister to the higher faculties of his nature. He will keep it pure, unharmed by sensual vice and indulgence, and will train its members by exercise and in healthy out-door play, so that it may promptly do the bidding of the intellect and the affections. He will also remember that if he would get the purest enjoyment from his bodily powers he must exercise and unfold the higher faculties. "Mental and moral activity keep the body healthy, strong, and young, preserve from decay, and renew the life." The studies that develop the mind and satisfy the hunger for knowledge, and the good works that bring the satisfactions of an approving conscience, help to keep the body sound, and minister to its true life.

7. But selfishness, as distinguished from self-love, consists chiefly in pursuing the objects of our own desires with no regard for the welfare and the happiness of our fellow-men. Many of the vices that injure those who practise them bring wretchedness to others. No man *can* live to himself alone; but every man may lead such a low and degraded life that even if he does not actively injure other men he will do them harm simply by being a foul, unwholesome presence in his home and in the community. Instances of this kind of selfishness will readily occur to every reader. On the other hand, when a man is actuated by true self-love, when he strives to be his perfect self, to make the most of all his powers of body, mind, and heart, he becomes a benefactor to others, simply by being what he is, even when he has no conscious purpose of living a helpful life.

"If our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 't were all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched
But to fine issues."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

One of the wisest maxims of Pythagoras, in his Golden Verses, is that in which he enjoins the pupil to "reverence himself."

Love yourself; and in that love not unconsidered leave your honor. — SHAKSPEARE.

What is man that thou art mindful of him? . . . Thou hast made him but little lower than God. — PSALM viii. 4, 5, Revised Version.

Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. — 1 COR. vi. 19.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What Commandment is called by the Apostle James the *Royal Law?* Note on Luke x. 27.
2. What other Commandment did the "lawyer" repeat to Jesus? Same note.
3. What three kinds of duties do we find in these two Commandments? Same note.
4. Which part of religion is most popular at the present day? § 1.
5. Repeat the *Harry Wadsworth* motto. § 1.
6. What caused the *Prodigal Son* to fall into sin, self-love or self-neglect? Note on Luke xv. 17.
7. Repeat Matt. xvi. 26 from the Revised Version.
8. When a railroad is built to the Pacific coast, what benefit do the States and Territories over which it passes derive from it?
9. What does this illustrate?
10. What part of the story of the Temptation of Jesus is like the saying of Jesus in Matt. xvi. 26? Note.
11. What is the word that best expresses the abuse of self-love?
12. *How* is selfishness an abuse of self-love? § 4.
13. Suppose a man is so generous to the poor as to have no money left to pay his honest debts with, — what does his generosity then become?
14. Apply this principle to self-love.
15. What does true self-love bid us do with respect to our bodies? § 6.
16. Why have we not a right to do as we please with our bodies, if we do no harm to other people? § 6.
17. What answer did the boy give who was tempted to injure his body? § 6.
18. What, besides bodily exercise and care for one's health, will keep the body in good condition? § 6.
19. What is the real meaning of selfishness as we commonly use the word? § 7, first sentence.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Name the three classes of duties that are taught and implied in the Two Great Commandments of Jesus.
2. Which of these duties have we been studying in the preceding lessons?
3. What has *conduct* been said to be? § 1.
4. Who is the saint of to-day? § 1.
5. How is the "enthusiasm of humanity" nobler than the self-love of the hermit and salvationist?
6. How is duty to self taught in the parable of the Prodigal Son? Note on Luke xv. 17.
7. Repeat Matt. xvi. 26 from the Revised Version.
8. What is the "self" here spoken of?
9. How is its value recognized in the story of the Temptation? Note on Matt. xvi. 26.
10. What does Phillips Brooks say about selfishness? § 3.
11. How does he illustrate his remark? § 3.
12. How old a word is the English word "selfishness"? § 4.
13. How do vices sometimes grow from virtues? Illustrate. § 4.
14. Justify the use of the phrase, *care for one's soul.* § 5.
15. What are the "springs" of human action? § 5.
16. How does the "soul" or "self" regulate and control the appetites and passions? § 5.
17. Quote three sayings from Shakspeare on loving one's self. § 5, and see also the *Golden Sayings.*
18. How does a selfish man treat his bodily appetites? § 6.
19. What is the dictate of a true self-love with respect to the body? § 6.
20. What effect has mental and moral activity on physical health? § 6.
21. Define selfishness as this is explained in § 7, first sentence.
22. Give the last prose sentence of § 7, and your opinion of what is stated there.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Self-love and benevolence. 2. Christianity as the science of perfect manhood. 3. Distinction between Christian self-love and prudence.

LESSON XXII.

SELF-CULTURE.

Matt. xxv. 14–30. Compare Luke xix. 11–27.

GOLDEN TEXT.— Unto every one that hath shall be given.— Matt. xxv. 29.

THE MEANING.

Verse 15. "*To one he gave five talents.*" Five talents would be equal to a little more than six thousand dollars. Our word "talents," derived from this Greek word denoting money, means a man's natural or acquired powers, his qualities of mind or heart, the *bent* of his nature, and also his possessions and opportunities, — whatever, in short, he can use for his own good or the good of others.

"*According to his several ability,*" — that is, according to the capacity of each servant to do business with the talents. In applying the parable we cannot make the same distinction, since ability is itself a kind of talent. We are held accountable only for what we are able to do. But our faculties, endowments, possessions, etc., are, in general, our abilities, — that is, our powers of knowing and doing. We call the *particular kind* of ability which a man has, his talent. One man has a talent for speaking, another for music, another for mechanics, and another for trade.

Verse 16. "*Straightway.*" In the Revised Version this word is rightly joined with the sentence that follows: "*Straightway he . . . went and traded,*" etc. As soon as he found himself in possession of the talents he set out to use them. It should be noticed that these servants were bond-servants. They belonged to their master, and were bound to take care of his property. Many slaves in antiquity were artisans and traders; some were even teachers and writers.

Verse 18. "*Hid his lord's money.*" The excuses which this servant made for what he did are stated in verses 24 and 25. The true reason was that he was himself a "hard" man, lazy and envious, ready to blame others for his own failures, and insolent towards those whom he ought to have served. The false picture he draws of his "lord" in verses 24 and 25 is a true picture of himself.

Verse 20. "*I have gained other five talents.*" One who uses and improves his powers gains as much as if he had acquired so many new powers. He who cultivates any talent makes that talent many times as valuable as it was before.

Verse 21. "*The joy of thy lord.*" In ancient times a "good and faithful" slave often received his liberty, and became the friend and companion of his master. So the faithful soul enjoys a larger freedom and the divine approval.

Verse 24. On verses 24 and 25 see note on verse 18.

Verse 27. "*Mine own with interest.*" This

servant might at least have taken enough pains with his lord's money to have put it out at interest. The truth here illustrated is not that God drives a bargain with us, and looks sharply after what is His; but that those who will not serve Him from love, who think His demands are hard, cannot in this way escape their obligations. If, like this wicked servant, men persist in regarding God as a stern Master instead of a loving Father, then on their own showing they are bound to put to some profitable use the talents He has given them.

Verse 29. "*Unto every one that hath shall be given,*" etc. This means that whoever has the right thing to begin with is in the proper condition for going on and getting more.

Verse 30. "*The outer darkness.*" "The figure is that of darkness outside the house of feasting or the king's palace, blazing with lamps and torches." See Matt. viii. 12 and xxii. 13.

THE TEACHING.

1. In Dr. James Freeman Clarke's valuable book entitled "Self-Culture," the subject of the first chapter is "Man's *Duty* to Grow." "By effort and thought," he says, "man can acquire knowledge, become accomplished, refine and purify his nature, develop his powers, strengthen his character. And because he *can* do this, he ought to do it." This is the teaching of the parable of the Talents. The truth, the beauty, and the goodness that we take into our being share our being's immortality. The *motive* to self-culture is lofty and inspiring. We are to work for enduring riches; for a position that no malice or envy can take from us; for the glory that shines from a true manhood as the brightness streams from star or sun.

2. The parable of the Talents teaches us that the divine kingdom demands faithful service of all its citizens, and also that this service is valued according to the fidelity of each person in using his own gifts. Men's talents differ; but if they are used with equal diligence they earn the same rewards.

> "All service ranks the same with God:
> . . . there is no last nor first."

The meaning of the parable, then, is that men to whom God has given various kinds of faculties and endowments, with opportunities for their use, should devote their time to self-culture, and thus unfold their nature and grow into what God meant each one to become. We are all commanded to *make the most of ourselves.*

3. The great law of growth is stated in our *Golden Text:* "Unto every one that hath shall be given." This is true of our bodily powers. A muscle that is exercised grows. The man who keeps the laws of health gains more and more strength. It is true of money. In all business men begin with some capital, and increase this as they use it. It is true of all enterprises and undertakings. "Nothing succeeds like success;" that is, success commands attention and wins support, and so grows to greater success. And the other part of the saying in the parable is equally true to the facts of life: "From him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away." This sentence, which many persons call a "hard saying," simply means: He who hath not what he ought to have, because he has failed to use what was given to him at first, will gradually lose the power of gaining. His "gift," or "talent," will practically be taken away from him. The mole that burrows in the ground has eyes at first. But eyes are given for seeing; and since the mole does not use his eyes for that purpose. Nature closes them up. So when men are too indolent to use their powers and do not grow into what they were meant to be, they sink below the level of manhood, and lose the capacities and abilities that they once possessed.

4. The command to use and improve his talents is addressed to every one; but to the young it comes with a special emphasis. God gives us many of our talents when he gives us life, and we must early in life be "up and doing." We must begin in childhood to cultivate our powers of body, mind, and soul, using

all the helps that are given us. The Gospel of Luke tells us that from the time when Jesus was twelve years old — and he had even then grown to be a thoughtful and inquiring boy — he "grew in wisdom and in favor with God and man."

5. The self-culture which is taught in the parable of the Talents is *a complete development of the whole man.* As the lily unfolds into perfect stem, perfect leaf, and perfect flower, so we are to cultivate each and every part of our nature, that in God's great garden we may become perfect human flowers, giving the fragrance of our lives to sweeten the lives of others, and letting it rise as an incense of sweet savor unto God. Our duty to grow morally and spiritually is set forth in one form or another in all these lessons. In this lesson let us now consider the duty of having sound minds in bodies that are sound.

6. Every book of good counsel to the young has a chapter on Health, or the Training and Care of the Body. To keep one's body well is not selfishness, but a duty each one owes to himself. The Apostle tells us to glorify God with our body as well as our spirit, and even calls the body the sacred house, the temple, of the Holy Spirit. To have a healthy body that will always be the "nimble servant" of the mind, one must keep himself from every vice and indulgence that saps the bodily strength; from every passion, like anger or hatred, that like an inward fire burns the body's vitality. What to do and what not to do are easily learned. The main thing is to make the preservation and care of the health a *duty,* — to regard our bodily powers as talents given us to improve. "No carpenter will go to his work without seeing that his chest of tools is in good order. The musician examines his instrument every day to keep it in tune. Let us do as much as this for our own body. That is our wonderful box of tools, our organ with thousands of pipes."

7. There is a saying of Mahomet, often quoted: "If I had but two loaves of bread, I would sell one and buy hyacinths; for they would feed my soul." This is poetry, but it contains a most important truth. The Bible says: "Man shall not live by bread alone." We must do more than feed our bodies and care for our health, and in doing this "more" we are to find the great work of self-culture. Truth, beauty, and goodness are infinite, and can never be exhausted. In acquiring these we can grow forever. The world we now live in is full of the things which "feed the soul." Nature is uttering day by day the thoughts of God which we may "think after Him;" and how much there is for us to learn of her forms and forces, her orderly movements, and her wonderful laws! And then think of "that grand outcome of the world's thought which we call Literature," — the record of the noble things men have conceived and have *lived* for so many centuries! Do we not owe it to ourselves to "feed our souls" on the best thought-food which other souls have gathered for us? To do this is not to become less useful but more useful in the world. The world is made better by the man who lives in it and by his noble passion for self-culture is continually making himself more of a man. Society is the sum of the individuals that compose it; and if each individual is devoted to a true and wise self-improvement, society will improve.

8. And now do we ask: What are the rewards of thus continuing to use our God-given talents? One great reward is to feel that we have the divine approval, — that the "lord" whom we serve is saying to us, "Well done." Another is to "enter into the joy" of that lord. When a son sympathizes in his father's labors and shares his toils and becomes his co-worker, he is so much more a son than when he is doing something else. So, as God's sons, we are called to use our powers, improve our faculties, and grow up in all things towards His perfections, that we may share in His life and its blessedness. And then there is one more reward. Faithful service leads to higher privileges. He whose five talents had gained other five was "set over many things." The child who helps his parent in a loving spirit is never happier than when some larger task is given him to do. This is the divine law.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

A sound mind in a sound body. — JUVENAL.

Cultivation to the mind is as necessary as food is to the body. — CICERO.

He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best. — P. J. BAILEY.

I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God. — PHIL. iii. 14.

And the child grew and waxed strong, becoming full of wisdom. — LUKE ii. 40.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Tell the parable, or story, of the man who gave his talents to his servants.
2. How much of our money are five talents? Note on ver. 15.
3. What do we mean by our word "talents"? Same note.
4. What is meant by "according to his several ability"? Same note.
5. *How soon* did the man to whom five talents were given go and trade with them?
6. What kind of servants were these mentioned in the parable? Note on ver. 16.
7. What sort of a man was the servant who "hid his lord's money"? Note on ver. 18.
8. How do we gain more talents by using what we have? Note on ver. 20.
9. Define the "joy" mentioned in ver. 21. Note.
10. What does ver. 27 mean? Note.
11. What does the Golden Text mean? Note on ver. 29.
12. What is meant by the "outer darkness"? Note on ver. 30.
13. Why is it our duty to grow? § 1.
14. What is the *sum* of the teaching of the Parable of the Talents? § 1, last sentence.
15. Show how the Golden Text is true of our bodily powers, of money, etc. § 3.
16. Explain the saying, "From him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away." § 3.
17. Who are *specially* commanded to cultivate their powers? § 4.
18. What is said of the growth of Jesus? § 4.
19. How can we have a healthy body? § 6.
20. What is the body likened to in § 6, last part?
21. What saying of Mahomet is quoted in § 7?
22. What things should we all study? § 7.
23. Name some of the "rewards" of self-culture. § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Give the substance of the Parable of the Talents.
2. What is it that is "as when a man travelling," etc.?
3. How much was a Greek "talent" worth in our money? Note on ver. 15.
4. Explain the derivation and meaning of the English word *talents*. Same note.
5. Distinguish between "abilities" and "talents." Same note.
6. What kind of servants were those mentioned in the Parable? Note on ver. 16.
7. Show how the slothful servant draws a portrait of his own character. Note on ver. 18.
8. Explain the phrase, "the joy of thy lord." Note on ver. 21.
9. Explain ver. 27.
10. Explain "the outer darkness." Note on ver. 30.
11. What is the *motive* to self culture? § 1.
12. Explain fully the general meaning of the Parable of the Talents. § 2.
13. Explain and illustrate the great law of growth which is stated in the Golden Text. § 3.
14. Illustrate the law of degeneracy which is also given in ver. 29. § 3.
15. State the self-culture which is taught in this lesson in the words that are given in § 5, opening sentence, or in your own words.
16. Show how care of one's body is a *duty*. § 6.
17. To what is the body compared in § 6, last part?
18. Give the saying of Mahomet and the parallel one from the New Testament. § 7.
19. What things "feed the soul"? § 7.
20. What relation is there between the self-culture of the individual and the improvement of society?
21. What are some of the rewards of self-culture? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The danger of losing one's self in one's occupation. 2. The safeguards of self-culture. 3. How far is education self-education?

LESSON XXIII.

SELF-SACRIFICE.

Matt. xviii. 8, 9, and xvi. 21–25.

GOLDEN TEXT. — For the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. — Mark x. 45.

THE MEANING.

Matt. xviii. 8 and 9. "*Offend thee,*" — better, as in the Revised Version, "*causeth thee to stumble.*" In ver. 7 Jesus had spoken in a general way of temptations to wrong-doing. In this verse he goes on to say, in the strongest kind of figurative language, that a man must never allow himself to get into the snares of sin. He does not mean that we are really to cut off our hands or our feet, or pluck out our eyes. Our hands and feet and eyes are members of the body that are "near and dear" to us. But all sin is *of the heart.* We do wrong when we follow a lower principle rather than a higher one with which it conflicts. If duty points one way and inclination or desire points another way, we must "cut off" the inclination or "pluck out" the desire, however dear it may be to us, or however strongly we may have set our hearts on following it. "*Enter into life,*" —that is, into the life of the divine kingdom, the true life of a son of God. "*Everlasting fire,*" "*hell fire.*" A full explanation of these terms will be found on page 23 of these lessons.

Matt. xvi. 21. "*From that time,*" — that is, after the time when Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Messiah. (See verses 13–20 of this chapter.) "*Elders, chief priests, and scribes.*" The different classes of members of the Sanhedrin, or supreme court of the nation; the "elders" being the *lay* members.

Verse 22. "*Peter took him.*" He either took Jesus apart, or more probably took hold of his garment, and broke in upon his speech. "*Be it far from thee, Lord.*" In the margin of the Revised Version this sentence is translated "God have mercy on thee." The meaning of the whole verse is, "God forbid! This thing must not happen to thee." Doubtless intense affection for his Master prompted Peter to speak as he did; yet we also see in his language a familiarity and disrespect, as well as a forwardness in attempting to dictate his Master's course, which called for rebuke.

Verse 23. "*Get thee behind me, Satan.*" The Hebrew word "Satan" meant *adversary* or *seducer.* Peter was opposing Jesus, and trying to seduce him from his chosen path of duty.

Verse 24. No image could have been more appalling to the Jews than the image of the cross. To take up one's cross meant to them, as indeed Jesus intended it to be understood, to be ready to practise *any* self-denial, even the hardest one could imagine, in order to live the true life of a son of God. Nothing must interfere with the great end of man's being, which is to be a son and a brother in the family of the Heavenly Father.

Verse 25. See note on Matt. x. 39 on page 78 of these lessons.

THE TEACHING.

1. PROBABLY few among those who are studying these lessons have not read the charming book by Charles and Mary Lamb, called "Tales from Shakspeare." But how many of them know the story of the lives of this brother and sister? Mary, the sister, who was ten years older than her brother, had killed their mother in a fit of insanity when Charles was but seventeen years old. From that time young Lamb devoted his life to the care of this poor sister. For her sake he gave up everything, — love, ambition, fame, — that he might provide her a home and "shelter her shattered mind from the shocks and blows of a scornful world." His life thus became one long act of self-sacrificing love, more beautiful than the finest essay or poem he ever wrote.

2. There have been many such lives ever since the great law of self-renouncing love was revealed in the life of him who "took up his cross daily until he died upon it." Yet to many minds, and especially to the young, this law of self-sacrifice seems hard to understand and still harder to obey. The word "sacrifice" carries us back in imagination to a time when men in heathen lands, as well as among the Jews, *gave up something* as a tribute to a Higher Power, or to represent their self-devotion to the Being or beings whom they worshipped. Those old sacrifices have passed away; but that for which they stood remains as a law and necessity of human life, — namely, the *giving up of something*. When it is spoken of as self-sacrifice or self-denial, it means the giving up of the lower self to the higher self; the surrender of passions to principles, of inclination to duty. Or it means, in our relations with others, the giving up of our ease or of our pleasures or even of our personal interests to those affections which have not self for the object, — to the happiness and welfare of our fellow-men.

3. It will help us to understand what self-sacrifice or self-denial requires of us if we think of life as a continual conflict of desires. In this strife something must always be preferred, and therefore *something* must at the same time be denied or given up. When the body is allowed to rule instead of being made to serve, we deny the higher for the sake of the lower. When the appetites and passions obey the conscience, then we deny the rule of the lower for the sake of the reign of the higher. To subdue the sensual to the spiritual, the animal in us to the divine in us, is the true self-sacrifice, by which we make the most of ourselves and unfold our appointed lives.

4. Examples of this kind of self-denial are abundant. They are found in the biographies of hundreds of the world's greatest and most useful men. John Milton, whose long life was "a heroic poem," gave up in his youth all lower kinds of pleasure, forsook society, and devoted himself entirely to the studies which developed his powers of mind. Other men who have become great inventors, great scientists, great statesmen, were in their early years "pillowed on hardship, taught by poverty, made strong by neglect."

5. But this giving up of the lower self is a still nobler thing when it is done for the sake of gaining a virtuous character. The lower self has its claims upon us. We have senses as well as intellect, appetites as well as aspirations, and there are pure pleasures which come to us through our lower nature. One should *enjoy* his food even to have it do him the good it was meant to give. Sports and games and "youthful jollity" belong to childhood, and play is as needful as work to the young. But suppose an article of food that you enjoy is going to do you harm in some way that perhaps you may not now understand; you must give it up for the sake of the good that will come of such denial. Or suppose the sport you are fond of interferes with a lesson that should be learned; you must deny yourself the pleasure for the sake of mental growth.

6. The chief sphere, however, in which self-sacrifice acts is the sphere of our relations to others. A child soon learns that he is not only to be helped by others and to help

himself, but is himself to be helpful and even to give up some things in order that others may have their share. A boy of some three years old found his customary romp with his father interfered with by the claims of his little one-year-old sister. When the father explained that he must sometimes play with baby, the boy, thinking only of himself, replied, "But you did n't use to once." Gradually, we may presume, the boy came to see that the claims of others would often compel him to give up some claim or pleasure of his own. To do this in a loving spirit is the mark of true goodness. Nothing is sadder than to see a child growing up with the idea that everything must be done by others to make home pleasant for him, while he himself never practises even the smallest self-denials.

7. It has been said that there are three directions or dimensions of human life, — length, breadth, and height. The length is a man's reaching out in the line of growth and self-culture and of the special work he is fitted to do. The height of life is its reaching up toward God. And then there is life's breadth, — the reach outward into sympathy with other men and into self-denying labors for their welfare. That man leads the true life of a son of God who strives to unite this length and height and breadth, — to be true to himself while he blesses others and "glorifies God." But suppose, in trying to gain self-culture or in pursuing his special calling, he runs the risk of losing the breadth of life, — of forgetting not only the happiness, but even the rightful claims of others, — what is he to do? The follower of Jesus will know at once what he is to do. *He must deny himself.* Doing good must come before getting good. "*Love* is the fulfilling of the law;" and it is the nature of love to be unselfish and to minister to the wants of others. A child is not to sacrifice the peace and comfort of home, even in striving to get useful knowledge and to stand well at school.

8. The conflict between the duties we owe to ourselves with respect to ourselves and the duties we owe to ourselves with respect to others is often as difficult as it is painful. When the struggle is between the world and a righteous life, between self-interest and truth, or between "the flesh" and "the spirit," it is comparatively easy to see which is the right path to take. But when our sympathies and our affections come into conflict with our need of culture and our devotion to a noble career, the problem is not so easily solved. We can solve it in the case of single actions. Well do I remember the gracious kindness of one of New England's eminent scholars who gave a precious hour from his morning's studies that he might personally introduce the needy college student to the benevolent friend who was ready to help him. Sacrifices of this sort might easily encourage the selfishness of those for whom they are made; and besides it is certain that "sympathy with others in a man who has no strong or clear direction for himself is soft and weak." That man best helps the lives of those about him who is striving with all his soul to be something himself.

9. Yet the Christian life is rightly defined as a *life of self-renouncing love.* We have again and again been reminded in these lessons that the leading idea in the teachings of Jesus is his idea of man as *Son and Brother.* But the brotherhood is not for the sake of the sonship; *the sonship is for the sake of the brotherhood.* In the loving service of others occasions will often arise when the law of self-sacrifice will overrule the law of self-culture. Such an occasion comes to the patriot when at his country's call he gives his life to save the nation's larger life. It comes to the mother when she holds her own health — her very life, even — as nothing worth if she can only shield and save the life of her child. It has come — how many times in the glorious history of Christian souls! — to men and women who have turned aside from the culture, the position, the just renown they *might have won,* to humbler tasks that the necessities of their fellow-men laid upon them. The recognition of the supreme worth of such self-sacrifice has turned the cross from an instrument of infamy to the symbol of the noblest manhood, and made the life of him who for our advantage was nailed on the bitter tree the inspiration and the pattern of the true life of man.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

We can offer up much in the large, but to make sacrifices in little things is what we are seldom equal to. — GOETHE.

Brave conquerors! for so you are, that war against your own affections and the huge army of the world's desires. — SHAKSPEARE.

There never did and never will exist anything permanently noble and excellent in a character which was a stranger to the exercise of resolute self-denial. — WALTER SCOTT.

In this world it is not what we take up, but what we give up, that makes us rich. — BEECHER.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. — LUKE ix. 23.

If meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I may not make my brother to stumble. — 1 COR. viii. 13.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What does Jesus say in Matt. xviii. 8?
2. What kind of language do we call this? Note.
3. What do we mean when we say a child has "lost his tongue"?
4. What do the words of Jesus in this 8th verse really mean? Note.
5. What *is* wrong-doing? Note.
6. What, then, are we to "cut off," or "pluck out"? Note.
7. What do you think of Peter's conduct and speech, as related in Matt. xvi. 22?
8. What did the Hebrew word "*Satan*" mean? Note on ver. 23.
9. Why did Jesus apply it to Peter?
10. What did the phrase, *take up one's cross*, mean to the Jews? Note on ver. 24.
11. Tell the story of the life of Charles Lamb. § 1.
12. What were *sacrifices* among the Jews and the heathen in ancient times? § 2.
13. How much of the old meaning of the word "sacrifice" remains as a law for us? § 2.
14. Give an example of self-denial practised for the sake of getting an education. § 4.
15. Give examples of self-denial practised for the sake of gaining a virtuous character. § 5.
16. Tell the story of little Three-year-old given in § 6, and show what it illustrates.
17. What is the follower of Jesus to do if he has to choose between doing good and getting good? § 7.
18. What did a great scholar do to help a needy college-student? § 8.
19. What is said about *sonship* and *brotherhood* in the beginning of § 9?
20. Give some of the illustrations of self-sacrifice mentioned in § 9.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Explain the figurative language used in Matt. xviii. 8, 9. Note.
2. Define *wrong-doing* as it is explained in this note.
3. What was the occasion of the conduct and speech of Peter related in Matt. xvi. 22? Note.
4. How does his speech appear to you?
5. What did the Hebrew word "*Satan*" mean? Note on ver. 23.
6. What is told us of the speech and arts of "Satan" in the fourth chapter of Matthew?
7. Explain ver. 24, and show why the image of the cross was appalling to a Jew. Note.
8. Explain ver. 25.
9. What made the life of Charles Lamb so noble? § 1.
10. What was the *original* meaning of sacrifice? § 2.
11. Define self-sacrifice as a law of the Christian life. § 2, last part.
12. Explain this still further by reference to life as a conflict. § 3.
13. What kind of self-denial is illustrated in the life of such a man as Milton? § 4.
14. Give illustrations of self-denial from every-day life. § 5.
15. Tell the story of little Three-year-old and its lesson. § 6.
16. What three "dimensions" of life are spoken of in § 7?
17. What must be done if getting good and doing good come into conflict? § 7.
18. Illustrate this from the example mentioned in § 8.
19. Sonship and brotherhood, — which must take precedence? § 9.
20. Illustrate by examples instanced in § 9.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Sacrifices among the Jews and the heathen in antiquity. 2. Rights and duties, how to be adjusted. 3. The "*chief end of man*," — is it to live a "life of self-renouncing love"?

LESSON XXIV.

DISINTERESTEDNESS.

Luke xiv. 12–14. (Let the pupil also read the parable of the Hours, in Matt. xx. 1–16.)

GOLDEN TEXT. — Do good . . . hoping for nothing again. — Luke vi. 35.

THE MEANING.

NOTE ON THE GOLDEN TEXT. In the ed Version this verse is translated, "Do em (i. e. your enemies) good . . . never de- airing." But the meaning which this gives not unlike that of the Golden Text. Give to hers, do even your enemies good, and do not : the absence of an immediate reward make u lose heart or hope. Your reward shall be eat, for *you shall be sons of the Most High.* o one denies that disinterested service has its ward; but its reward is not what men under- d as gain or advantage or pleasure. It is owth of character, increase of spiritual life, er likeness to God.

Luke xiv. 12. "*A dinner or a supper,*"— t is, the morning meal, commonly taken a tle before noon, and the evening meal, taken out sunset. "*Call not thy friends . . . nor ch neighbors.*" We must remember that sus said this at a feast in the house of one the chief Pharisees. He had already had on to rebuke the unseemly strife among e guests, each one of whom had tried to push lf into the highest place at the table. now turns to the host, and with an obvious nce to the selfishness which had been ed by the guests, teaches the master of east the way to exclude all selfishness society. Do your acts of kindness to who will be so glad to receive them that will not strive for the highest seats, and then you will be free from all suspicions of selfishness in your benevolence.

Verse 13. "*A feast,*" — literally, as in chap. v. 29, *a reception.* Such a public feast given to the poor would now-a-days savor of ostentation. Among Eastern peoples, however, open hospitality has always been the custom. "The essence of the teaching of Jesus, as distinct from its form, remains for all who give freely, in what at the time is the best and wisest way, to those who can give them no recompense in return."

Verse 14. "*Thou shalt be blessed.*" There is always a reward for right-doing, only this reward is never in the nature of pay. When Jesus says, "Do good, hoping for nothing again," and again, "Give, and it shall be given to you," he does not contradict himself. Experience confirms both these sayings. "Only the man who gives freely, without calculation, out of the fulness of his heart, ever can find his love returned to him."

"*The resurrection of the just.*" This phrase, we now know, in the light of the general teachings of Jesus, means not only the rising of the righteous dead, but also the rising of the living into fellowship with the divine love. Not pay hereafter, but the present blessedness of those who are "risen with Christ," is the promised reward.

THE TEACHING.

1. If we look, as we always should, to the *life* of Jesus for the best illustration of his teachings, we shall find our present lesson-passage made clear, and even luminous, by the simple statement that he "pleased not himself." In all his dealings with men he shows us how a man will act whose love for others is wholly disinterested, and has in it no taint of self-reference. For the highest charm in the character of Jesus is not the self-sacrificing benevolence which it manifests. We can conceive of a life spent in doing good, in helping others and serving mankind, which, placed by the side of the life which Jesus lived, would be like the rose without its perfume or the lark without its song. "To do good, hoping for nothing again," to invite to the feast of our self-renouncing helpfulness not those who will in return ask us to their feasts, but "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," who cannot recompense us, — this is the highest type of benevolence, the love that sings its cheery song just as the bird sings, asking for no reward save the joy that is in the singing. In God's sight our self-sacrifices have no value save as they are prompted by a loving spirit. "If I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

2. This disinterested quality of goodness is displayed in everything that Jesus did. He healed men's bodies, because he had compassion on them, not to gain their good-will. He defended the weak and took the side of the despised and the uninfluential, who had no favors to reward him with. He made friends, not for what they could do for him, but for what he could do for them. He trained a band of disciples, not to constitute his party and shout the praises of their leader, but to carry on his mission of self-denying love. When he wept over Jerusalem it was not like a Greek patriot, who might bewail the evil fortunes of the country which could confer no merited honor upon himself, but as a loving mother, whose sorrow is the keener pang of seeing her children wander from her guidance.

3. Yet right here we come upon a prominent feature of the teachings of Jesus which, at first sight, seems to stand in contradiction to this doctrine of disinterestedness. I mean the constant reference in those teachings to the *rewards* of goodness. The morality of Jesus is not enforced by threats, but proclaimed with blessings. Every command lies between a beatitude and a promise, as if he had said, "Blessed are ye, — be merciful, — for ye shall obtain mercy." "In short, it is 'Blessed — for,' 'Blessed — for,' from beginning to end; while the duties are concealed between the promises, and the burdens hidden under the pleasures." And not in the Beatitudes only are rewards offered to those who walk in the way of God's commandments. To the rich young man who asked, "What shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus answered, "*If thou wouldst enter into life*, keep the commandments." And again, when Peter asked the question, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" he received from Jesus the inspiring answer to this effect: "They who make sacrifices for me and my cause shall receive an hundred-fold of the things renounced, *and in the world to come eternal life*." Such passages as these almost appear to sanction what has well been called the "eternal selfishness," which says, "Give up this world, that you may have the next; lose *here*, that you may gain *hereafter*."

4. But is this looking to the recompense of reward the real motive which the Gospel gives us? Is not the Christian's aim perfection rather than happiness? Does not the true spirit of Christianity prompt men to do right disinterestedly, and not from the hope of any personal advantage or reward, either temporal or spiritual? That this is the grand lesson of the Gospel will be readily perceived, if we distinguish between what Jesus said about the *results* and the *motive* of right doing. It *is* true that the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, are blessed; that the things which are just and lovely and pure and true are emphatically useful; and that "godliness hath the

promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come."

But no man really finds the blessedness which follows right-doing, if he makes that and not the doing right his aim and motive; and the man who leads a godly life for the sake of its reward misses both the reward and the godliness. Just because true happiness is so precious, the law that "he who seeketh findeth," which holds of everything else that men care for, does not hold with regard to that blessedness which comes from doing right. In order to be happy, we must aim at something higher than happiness. Doing right is *attended with* happiness, not rewarded by it. Walk in the path of duty, and this attendant spirit will walk unseen by your side, blessing you as you walk. But the duty must be done disinterestedly, not for the rewards it can bestow, or for the pleasures it holds in its hand. One thing *always* follows doing right, *the enrichment of character;* and in the possession of that is a joy that cannot be taken away.

5. This lesson of the supreme value of disinterestedness fills out what has been taught in Lesson XXIII. on the duty of self-sacrifice. It shows us that what is worth most in God's sight is the *spirit* in which we do the duties that are required of us. This is the teaching of one of the least understood of the parables of Jesus, the parable of the *Hours* (Matt. xx. 1–16). In this story a man who has a vineyard hires laborers to work for him at a "penny" a day. But he seems to act very strangely, because the laborers who do not begin their work until the "eleventh hour" receive just as much pay as those who have toiled from early morning, "bearing the burden and the heat of the day." But the meaning of the story is that God, who is represented by the "householder," cares more for a small service that is done in a disinterested spirit and from love to Him than for a great service wh ı men do in a bargaining temper and in on to get their "pay." Indeed, Jesus told parable by way of giving a full answer to when the Apostle asked the Master what ards his faithful followers would receive.

6. For illustrations of disinterested goodness, we have only to look to the lives of that great multitude who, in all the Christian ages, have been the true disciples of him who "pleased not himself." Think of St. Paul and his self-denying labors in carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles; unwilling to be a burden to the churches for his support, his own hands ministering (by following his trade as a tent-maker) to his necessities! Think of Wilberforce, whose whole soul was so absorbed in the efforts he made to destroy the inhuman traffic in slaves, that to one who remonstrated with him because he gave no attention to the saving of his own soul he nobly replied that he was so busy trying to save others from misery that he had forgotten even that he had a soul! Think of devoted missionaries to heathen lands, like Judson and Livingstone; of heroic reformers, like Luther and Latimer; of philanthropic heroes and heroines, like Howard, and Elizabeth Fry, and Florence Nightingale! Or open the later pages of American history, and read of the disinterested patriotism of the countless heroes who died that freedom and their country might live! Or think, finally, of those religious sculptors who wrought in most exquisite fashion those parts of their statues which were removed from human sight, laboring in their high vocation not for what men would say of their work, but for their own thought and love of it!

> "In the elder days of Art,
> Builders wrought with greatest care
> *Each minute and unseen part;*
> For the Gods are everywhere."

By a "cloud of witnesses" to the divine loveliness of disinterested living are we surrounded to-day. A human world made bright and fair by such Christ-like souls, however imperfectly the holy light shines from their character, is not a selfish world; and the homage that men everywhere involuntarily pay to unselfish goodness testifies to the truth that such goodness, and not doing right for the sake of a reward, is "the natural way of living."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

There is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers. — SENECA.

A good man is like a vine which has produced grapes and seeks for nothing more after it has once produced its proper fruit. — MARCUS AURELIUS.

Virtue, without the aid of outward advantages, stands in no need of reward, and must be sought for her own sake. — OVID.

Whosoever shall seek to gain his life, shall lose it. — LUKE xvii. 33

He that seeketh the glory of Him that sent him, the same is true. — JOHN vii. 18.

Love seeketh not its own. — 1 COR. xiii. 5.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What reward is promised those who "do good, hoping for nothing again"? Luke vi. 35.
2. What were the hours for dinner and supper among the Jews? Note on Luke xiv. 12.
3. Tell something about the *occasion* which led Jesus to say "Call not thy friends," etc. Same note.
4. What kind of "a feast" is spoken of in verse 13? Note.
5. What do you think of the advice which Jesus gives about asking people to a feast?
6. What is the difference between "reward" and "pay"? Note on ver. 14.
7. What is meant by the "*resurrection of the just*"? Same note.
8. What kind of reward do the birds sing for? § 1, last part.
9. What gives to self-sacrifices their only value? § 1.
10. Mention some of the acts of Jesus which show that his goodness was disinterested. § 2.
11. State some of the rewards which Jesus promised to those who did well. § 3.
12. Which is the Christian's aim, — perfection or happiness? § 4.
13. Distinguish between the results and the motives of right-doing. § 4.
14. If your friend makes you a present in order to get a gift from you, what do you think of his giving?
15. In order to be happy what must we aim at? § 4.
16 Tell the parable of the Hours (Matt. xx. 1–16).
17. What lesson does this parable teach? § 5.
18. Give examples of disinterested goodness. § 6.
19. Recite the verse about the builders. § 6.
20. What kind of goodness is the "natural way of living"? § 6, last sentence.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Compare the two translations of the Golden Text, and show how they have in substance the same meaning. Note.
2 What occasion prompted Jesus to say to his host, "*Call not thy friends*," etc.? Note on Luke xiv. 12.
3. How can we to-day carry out the spirit of the command in ver. 13?
4. What two sayings are we told, in the note to ver. 14, "experience confirms"?
5. What is meant by the "*resurrection of the just*"? Same note.
6. What is said in § 1 to have been the highest charm in the character of Jesus?
7. How is this illustrated by a reference to bird-life?
8. What does St. Paul teach that enforces the same truth?
9. *How* did Jesus manifest disinterestedness? § 2.
10. What rewards of goodness did he promise? § 3.
11. What is the seeming contradiction here?
12. How can we reconcile the two classes of passages referred to? § 4.
13. How can we get happiness by not seeking for it?
14. What is the parable of the Hours (Matt. xx. 1–16)?
15. Why did Jesus tell it?
16. What lesson does it teach?
17. Give examples of disinterested goodness. § 6.
18. Recite Longfellow's lines about the builders.
19. Why is it said in § 6 that disinterested goodness is the "natural way of living"?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Rewards and punishments as incentives to virtue. 2. The New Testament doctrine of rewards. 3. Rochefoucauld's maxim that "the virtues and vices are all put in motion by interest."

LESSON XXV.

TEACHABLENESS.

Luke viii. 4–15; compare Matt. xiii. 1–9 and 18–23, and Mark iv. 1–9 and 14–20.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.—Matt. v. 6.

THE MEANING.

Luke viii. 4. Matthew tells us (chap. xiii. 1) that Jesus gave this parable while he was sitting in a boat and the multitude stood on the shore. Dean Stanley, in his "Sinai and Palestine," describes a waving corn-field extending on the hillside down to the edge of the Lake of Galilee. "There was the trodden pathway running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent the seed from falling here and there on either side of it or upon it; itself hard with the constant tramp of horse and mule and human foot."

Verse 5. The Revised Version translates, not "a sower," but "*the* sower," which gives us a more lively picture of the scene.

Verse 6. "*On the rock.*" "There," says Dean Stanley, in the description already quoted from, "was the rocky ground of the hillside protruding here and there through the corn-fields."

Verse 7. "*Among thorns.*" In Palestine thorny shrubs and plants abound, and their roots lie hidden in the ground at seed-time, just as the roots of weeds are hid in the fields where we plant the corn or sow the wheat.

Verse 8. "*A hundred fold.*" This seems a large yield. Yet we learn that in the year 1868 in England there were wheat-fields in which many single seeds produced each "thirty straws, which yielded between nine hundred and one thousand grains from a single parent seed."

"*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*" This expression Jesus often used when he wished to call special attention to the teaching which he had given; as if he had said: "What has now been told you is well worth considering."

The hearers of this parable knew that the fate of seed falling into the different places, which Jesus probably pointed out to them while he was speaking, would be just such as described in the story (more fully detailed in Matthew's report of it).

Verse 11. "*The word of God.*" Every living truth that enters man's heart and produces holiness of life, from whatever source it may immediately come, is from God,—is His word to the soul.

Verse 12. "*The devil.*" In the actual sowing described in the parable, the *birds* snatch away the seed. So, in the application of the parable, it is obvious that the word "devil" personifies the great number and variety of evil influences which remove from shallow minds the truths of which they have only a feeble hold.

Verse 13. This describes the large class of excitable and impulsive hearers. They receive the word readily, with joy but without thought. They "go with the crowd." The *romantic* side of truth attracts them, and they are "carried away" by whatever beautiful picture of goodness is brought before their minds. But a life

of virtue is a life of struggle; and only that kind of hearing the truth which takes it into the depths of the conscience and *roots* it there will make a man strong against temptation and trial.

Verse 14. In this verse we are shown the men who open their minds to the truth, but at the same time suffer other things to enter there, — worldly ambitions, the love of money, and the passion for pleasure. They are "double-minded," trying to serve *both* God and Mammon. But Truth says to the soul, "Love me *all in all* or not at all."

Verse 15. "*An honest and good heart,*" — better, "*a noble* and good heart." The noble heart scorns what is base, and seeks always as its highest end and aim "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The epithet "good" denotes large-heartedness, generous devotion, and self-forgetfulness. The act of Mary described in Lesson XVII. was called by the Master a "noble" work. In the Book of Acts Barnabas is called a "good" man, because he was a man of large and generous sympathies, capable of self-sacrifice for the cause of truth and right.

THE TEACHING.

1. We shall readily connect this lesson with the two that precede it if we take note of these words, written by St. Paul to the Romans: "Be not wise *in your own conceits*" (Rom. xii. 16). As the only goodness that is worth anything is *disinterested* goodness, so the only way to gain knowledge is to have an open and receptive mind, a mind not puffed up with its "own conceits," but ready and eager to learn, counting its present acquirements as the merest dust in the balance compared with what is yet to be attained.

2. The duty of having a docile or teachable spirit is very forcibly taught us in the parable of the Sower. This parable Jesus spoke at a great crisis in his public ministry. He had found the majority of the Jewish people in a very low spiritual condition. Their heart, he said "was waxed gross; their ears were dull of hearing and their eyes they had closed." The religious leaders of the people had become his bitter enemies. "His gentle spirit, his beautiful character, his winsome ways and words," only provoked their opposition the more. Then, as the end of his Galilean labors drew near, many of his own disciples "went back and walked no more with him." And as he looked forward to the tragedy which he knew awaited him at Jerusalem, he felt that even his true and devoted followers should be forewarned against disappointment. They must be taught that the truth which feeds the life of the soul goes down to the deep roots of that life, and produces convictions which trials and temptations and pain and loss cannot shake.

3. The soil in which truth is sowed is the human heart. On the condition of the heart depends the harvest that will come from the sowing. The same teaching is very differently received by different persons. A landscape or a painting or a piece of noble music calls forth different feelings in the breasts of different observers or hearers. A dull mind sees nothing in a field-daisy but a common, useless weed. Burns sees in it a "bonny gem" that cheerfully has "glinted forth amid the storm;" and Wordsworth calls it "Nature's favorite," that makes man's spirits "play with kindred gladness." So of the truths which Jesus taught, and which some one has likened to flowers gathered while the dew is still on them. Some hearts receive them as the trodden path receives the scattered seeds, which are only trampled under men's feet or snatched away by hungry birds. Others receive them as the rocky soil takes the seed into shallow places, where it can make no root. Others still receive them as the soil already half filled with roots of thorns and germs of weeds takes in the sower's seed. But some men there are whose minds and hearts are so open to all good influences, so well prepared to receive religious impressions, that they may be likened to the "good ground," into which

the Sower casts his seed and knows it will bring forth a hundred fold.

4. Our duty in this matter is to see to it that we have "the noble and good heart,"—the heart in which seeds of truth will find congenial soil. How can we do this? In the first place, that is a "noble and good heart" which desires to know truth, which wishes to learn the will of God that it may do that will, and therefore turns toward God as the flower turns its opening petals to the sun. In the Bible we read a good deal about an Eastern shepherd and his sheep. The sheep seem not to be the shepherd's flock or herd so much as his family. He knows them all, calls each one by name, goes before them and leads them to good pastures and refreshing waters, shares their lot, and guards them from every danger. We do not wonder that of such sheep it is said that they know their shepherd's voice and hear it and obey it. Now, this is just our relation to God if we really love Him. We shall be glad to hear His voice and willing to obey His word, because it is the voice of One whom we love and trust, the word of One who seeks only our highest good and our truest happiness.

5. Then, again, the "noble and good heart" is the heart that is faithful to the light it already has, and so is prepared to receive more light. Jesus said: "If any man *willeth* to do the will of God he shall know of my teaching." As if he had said, the way to know more of what God wants you to do is first to do so much of His will as is already plain to you. Agassiz, the great teacher of science, used to put a single object, a fish or a bird, into the hands of the pupil who was beginning to study natural history, and make the pupil study *by himself* that single specimen, until by the use of his own eyes and hands and brains the student had learned all he could about it; *then* the teacher would help him to a wider and a truer knowledge. But the first thing for the learner to do was to use faithfully and perseveringly the partly trained faculties and the small amount of knowledge he already had. This is God's way of teaching His children their duties and His will. They must first do the known and the nearest duty,—be gentle, kind, honest, charitable; and then by the doing of so much of the known will of God, they will make ready the soil of the heart for new truths and higher revelations.

6. Many bright examples of a teachable spirit are given us in the New Testament. Nathanael, about whom we read in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, had this spirit. He was a man "without guile," one who was not trying to serve *two* masters, not living a life of self-seeking, but "seeking after God." Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul, was another man of this sort. Lydia, of whom we read in the Book of Acts, had the same teachable heart; for her heart, so the record runs, "the Lord had opened to give heed unto the things spoken of by Paul." And to the same class of lowly, docile souls belonged Mary of Bethany, that eager listener to the words of Jesus, that noble doer of the generous action which is spoken of "wherever the Gospel is preached in the whole world."

7. Does any one ask: What is this "word of God" to which our minds should be ever open, and the soil of a "noble and good heart" be prepared to receive? Mary and Nathanael found it the gracious sayings that fell from the lips of the living Master; Lydia recognized it in St. Paul's impassioned speech; thousands of Christian souls have heard it in the lives of the "saints of God;" the Quakers have listened to it as the Spirit of the Most High has breathed into their own souls and wakened there its celestial strains. But the word of God comes to us through many voices. In the natural world we live in, "day unto day uttereth speech" of God. In the human world where our common duties lie, the presence and example of the good, the loving, and the true reveal the Word divine. That Word comes to the open mind from the deeps of music, from pictures of beauty, from the poet's verse, and the biographer's page. It comes, as Dr. Dewey has so eloquently said, "from wherever the Spirit of God, like the unseen wind, breathes holy refreshment and healing life through the hearts of the children of men."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

And gladly would he learn and gladly teach. — CHAUCER.

Beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies. — MILTON.

Teach me Thy way, O Lord! — PSALM lxxxvi. 11.

Whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, of good report . . . think on these things. — PHIL. iv. 8.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Where was Jesus when he gave the parable of the Sower? Note on ver. 4.
2. Describe the landscape that was before him. Same note.
3. What was meant by "on the rock," in ver. 6? Note.
4. What do you understand by the expression "among thorns," in ver. 7? Note.
5. Tell of a large yield of wheat in England. Note on ver. 8.
6. What was meant by the sentence, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"? Same note.
7. Tell what you think would become of seed sown in each of the four fields.
8. What is the "word of God" spoken of in ver. 11? Note.
9. Tell in your own language who the four classes of hearers are that are mentioned in the parable. See notes on verses 12, 13, 14, 15.
10. What precept about being wise did St Paul give, and what does it mean? § 1.
11. What is the "soil" in which truth is sowed? § 3.
12. How do different people see and hear the same things? Illustrate. § 3.
13. Tell what is said in § 4 about Eastern shepherds and their sheep.
14. Who will be most likely to hear and obey the voice of the Heavenly Shepherd? § 4.
15. What did Jesus say about doing and knowing, and what does his saying mean? § 5.
16. How did Agassiz set beginners to work studying natural objects? § 5.
17. How does God teach us higher truths? § 5, last part.
18. What is said of Nathanael in § 6?
19. What "generous action" is spoken of in § 6, last sentence? See Lesson XVII.
20. What kind of a hearer was Mary of Bethany?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Describe the place where the parable of the Sower was told. Note on ver. 4.
2. Explain ver. 6. Note.
3. Explain ver. 7. Note.
4. In ver. 8, explain "*a hundred fold.*" Note.
5. In same verse, explain the saying, "*He that hath ears,*" etc. Note.
6. What was the fate of seed sown in the four kinds of soil mentioned in this parable?
7. What is meant in this parable by the "devil"? Note on ver. 12.
8. What kind of people are described in ver. 13? Note.
9. What kind of people are described in ver. 14? Note.
10. Define and illustrate the "honest and good heart," spoken of in ver. 15. Note.
11. How would you connect this lesson with the two that precede it? § 1.
12. At what time in his ministry did Jesus speak this parable? § 2.
13. What different classes of the Jewish people were probably in his mind? § 2.
14. Illustrate the teaching of the parable by the different ways in which the same things are seen or heard by different persons. § 3.
15. What is the first condition of having the "noble and good heart"? § 4.
16. Illustrate the relation of the soul to God from the life of an Eastern shepherd. § 4.
17. What second condition of having the "noble and good heart" is stated in § 5?
18. Illustrate this by Agassiz's method of teaching a beginner. § 5.
19. Tell how the teachable spirit was shown by Nathanael, Barnabas, Lydia, and Mary of Bethany. § 6.
20. What is the "word of God" to which a "noble and good heart" is ever open? § 7.
21. How may we continually receive more of the light of this divine Word?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Obedience as the organ of spiritual knowledge. 2. In what sense is the Bible the "Word of God"?

LESSON XXVI.

HUMILITY.

Matt. xviii. 1–4, v. 5, and Luke xvii. 7–10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.— Matt. v. 5.

THE MEANING.

Matt. xviii. 1. "*Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*" On the homeward journey from the Mount of Transfiguration to Capernaum, the disciples had been talking among themselves of the greatness they would attain when the "kingdom" which they hoped for should be established.

Verse 2. "*A little child.*" Read chap. xix. 13. In the Gospel of Mark we read that Jesus took the child in his arms.

Verse 3. "*Be converted.*" This is much better rendered in the Revised Version, "*Except ye turn,*"—that is, turn from your self-seeking ambition and become as humble as little children.

Verse 4. "*Humble himself,*" etc.,—that is, *become* humble as this child now is. The trait of a child's nature which Jesus had in mind is its contentment with its littleness and dependence. What the disciples needed was so to realize their own littleness as to give up their unseemly disputes about who among them was the greatest, and strive with a teachable mind to grow up into the manhood which had been set before them.

Matt. v. 5. "*Inherit the earth,*"—that is, the land, the Canaan of the Old Testament promises, the kingdom of the Messiah. As a general promise, it here means the possession of spiritual blessings. Yet it is also true that meek and self-forgetting souls possess the really good things of earth. See § 9 in Lesson XV. p. 68.

Luke xvii. 7. "*A servant,*"—that is, a bond-servant, or slave. Such a slave was *bound* to do everything his master might require of him.

Verse 9. "*Thank that servant.*" Under the old relations between master and slave, masters never thought of thanking their servants for the performance of any duty.

Verse 10. "*We are unprofitable servants.*" This seems a "hard saying" when we think that in the parable of the Talents (see Lesson XXII.) the servants who make a right use of the talents intrusted to them are called "*good* and faithful," and are bidden to "enter into the joy of their Lord." But this short parable was given to teach another kind of lesson,—namely, that to do his duty a man must be true in action and feeling to the *full claims* of the relations in which he stands to others and to God. We are, indeed, not slaves, but *sons*. The Christian idea of Duty is not that of a stern Taskmaster, but, as a Christian poet has sung, that of a Law-giver, who wears—

> "The Godhead's most benignant grace;
> Nor know we anything so fair
> As is the smile upon thy face."

God is Love. His claims come to us in the form of blessings. The divine *grace* is the law of our conduct. We must therefore, as the grateful yet humble children of such a Father, convert our duties into affections and our affections into duties; nor ever think we have done anything to boast of so long as other duties remain undone, or if the duties done have lacked the grace of self-devoted as well as utterly conscientious service.

THE TEACHING.

1. HAD Jesus spoken our *Golden Text* to an audience of Greeks or Romans, they would have laughed him to scorn. You insulted a pagan when you called him humble. The Jews, on the other hand, had learned something of the beauty of humility. From the "olden time" their psalmists and prophets had praised the humble. "The meek shall inherit the land, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psalm xxxvii. 11, 12). "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity: . . . I dwell with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isa. lvii. 15). "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and *to walk humbly* with thy God?" (Micah vi. 8).

2. But Jesus not only redeemed the word which in classic usage meant mean-spiritedness; he also taught the Jew what it is that makes the humility which the psalmists honored and the prophets praised the crowning grace of manly character. This he did, in the first place, by making God the standard for men to strive after, and by showing them that in God self-devotion and loving service — the qualities that constitute true humility — are attributes of His Fatherhood. Merely to say to a man, "How little you are by the side of God's greatness, how ignorant you are if you measure your knowledge by God's wisdom, how feeble you are if you compare your strength with his omnipotence," is not enough to awaken the feeling of humility. You must show him that "the majesty of God is the majesty of a father, which takes our littleness into its greatness, makes it part of itself, honors it, trains it, and does not mock it." A child is not humiliated at the thought that his parents can do so much more than he can do himself. He simply feels humble about his own performances, while he is happy to do even the little that he is able to. So we see Jesus revealing God as Father and man as Son; and we know at once that when he says, "Happy are the meek," he means that the sons of God rejoice in meekly following after their Father.

3. But Jesus did more than to set the littleness of man against the greatness of God. *He revealed the possibilities that are in every child of God.* The story is told of a young art-student that when for the first time he stood before one of the greatest pictures that had ever been painted, the excellence of the work, so far from discouraging him, caused him to exclaim with true humility blended with a noble ambition: "And I too am a painter!" To see ourselves *as we might be*, to realize what a piece of work is man as God made him to be, — and then to recognize how little we are doing to come up to this ideal, how by our indolence we bury our talents in the earth, and by our sins lay waste our God-given powers, — surely this is to be shamed and humbled into making a more earnest effort to be our true, our diviner selves! Jesus shows us how tender, compassionate, and merciful, how just and holy, God is. But he also shows us what man may become as a son of such a Father, — how forbearing and forgiving, how loving and helpful, how pure and true and just, we all may be.

4. And then humbleness comes to us along with service to others. No man will be in danger of thinking of himself "more highly than he ought to think" who is devoting his life to help those who are around him and to lift up those who in gifts or privileges or attainments are below him. The essence of humility is forgetfulness of self. In the kingdom of heaven the king is the servant. Our Master in the art of right living is he who went about doing good; who stooped to the lowliest, and took by the hand the despised and the persecuted; who washed his disciples' feet, giving them an example that they should do to others as he had done to them.

5. The grace of humility is always best seen in those who are doing the best and the most *work*. The humblest men of science are those who have toiled hardest in the fields of knowledge and have seen their work open before them into measureless fields that reach far out of sight. The reformers, missionaries, philan-

thropists, whom the world delights to honor, have ever been "meek and lowly of heart." They have said, with St. Paul, "Not that I have already obtained . . . but I *press on*." They have labored for no earthly rewards, nor that their good works might be seen and praised of men. They have toiled on that God's kingdom might be enlarged, and have often died without the sight of the peace, the salvation, the redeemed society, for whose coming they gave up their lives. The modesty of true greatness has passed into a proverb. Yet those that have most merit have most to excuse pride. That which keeps them humble in their estimate of themselves is their knowledge that nothing they can ever do will overpay their debts to God and to man. The French have a saying, "*Noblesse oblige*," which means that one's rank lays certain obligations on him. Our rank as sons of God lays upon us all duties that we owe to Him, and that only those who love Him with *all* their mind and heart and soul and strength can even begin to discharge. We owe duties to our fellow-men that life, the longest life, is not long enough to enable us to perform. Other men in all past ages have labored for us, and we have entered into priceless possessions which their toils and sacrifices won for us. The least we can do to repay our debt to man is to consecrate our lives to man's uplifting. Freely have we received, freely must we give. When we have done our best and our utmost, and measure it all against what Duty demands of us, we shall see that we have done nothing to boast of, — nothing to make us otherwise than the *humble* followers of him who, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor," and gave his life that the life of man might be rich and great and acceptable in the sight of God.

6. It would be a profitable study to look back over all the preceding lessons of this course, and see how many of them teach indirectly the virtue of humility. There was no pride or thought of self in the quiet deed of mercy done by the Good Samaritan (Lesson II.). The Golden Rule of Justice (III.) bids us prefer another in honor rather than ourselves. The law of Judging Others (IV.) requires us to know ourselves, and let the consciousness of our own weakness weave the mantle of charity that we are to throw over the failings of our fellow-men. The sin of Contempt (V.) will never be harbored in the humble heart. Forbearance and Forgiveness (VI. and VII.) come from the sense of our kinship with the divine, combined with our need of forbearing and forgiving treatment. The Peacemakers, the sympathetic, and those who love their enemies (VIII., IX., and X.) are meek and lowly of heart. The Charitable and those who do not covet (XIV. and XV.) are saved from the pride, the haughtiness, and the restless desires of those that "trust in riches." Gratitude, Courtesy, and Lowly Service (XVII., XIX., and XX.) are marks of the meek-hearted; while Self-sacrifice, Disinterestedness, and Teachableness (XXIII., XXIV., and XXV.) are virtues which the proud soul can never possess.

7. The "conclusion of the whole matter" is that humility is inseparable from a Christian character; that one cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, and live the life of a true son of God unless he keeps himself humble "like a little child." If, then, the way to be humble is to be childlike, are not children naturally of a meek disposition? They would be so if they did not so often cease to be childlike, even in their earlier years. As soon as a child is *spoiled*, as we say, by excessive indulgence and foolish flattery and all kinds of unwise petting, he loses that charm of unconsciousness of self which we see in young children who enjoy so simply and so fully the things that are given them, and play and work so heartily that they lose themselves and all thought of self in what they are doing and enjoying.

The pupil will find some excellent illustrations of the virtue which this lesson sets forth in two of the chapters (chapters iv. and viii.) in Rev. H. N. Brown's "Sunday Stories." But the folly of being proud and conceited and the loveliness of a meek and self-forgetting spirit are shown to us every day in the examples of men and women, yes, and of children, all about us.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Humility is the solid foundation of all the virtues. — CONFUCIUS.

We cannot think too highly of our nature, or too humbly of ourselves. — COLTON.

Humility, — that low, sweet root
From which all heavenly virtues shoot.
MOORE.

The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. — PSALM xxv. 9.

Whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted. — MATT. xxiii. 12.

Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. — MATT. xi. 29.

Walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called . . . in all lowliness and meekness. — EPH. iv. 2.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Why did Jesus place a "little child" in the midst of his disciples? Notes on Matt. xviii. 1, 2.
2. What is meant, in ver. 3, by being "*converted*"? Note.
3. What is it to humble one's self? Note on ver. 4.
4. What is meant by the promise made in the *Golden Text* to the meek? Note on Matt. v. 5.
5. What kind of a "servant" is spoken of in Luke xvii. 7?
6. How do you reconcile what is said in ver. 10 with the blessing that is promised to the faithful in the parable of the Talents? Note on ver. 10.
7. What did the Greeks and Romans think of meekness? § 1.
8. What had the Jews been taught about this virtue? § 1.
9. Is a child humiliated, or is he rather made to feel humble, when he sees that his parents can do so much more than he can do? § 2.
10. Tell the story of the art-student in § 3.
11. How will serving others keep us humble? § 4.
12. Who are the humblest men of science? § 5.
13. What is the meaning of the French saying, "*Noblesse oblige*"? § 5.
14. Apply this to men in general.
15. Show how humility is *indirectly* taught in some of the preceding lessons. § 6.
16. Why are not all children meek? § 7.
17. Why do you like humble and self-forgetting people better than you like those who are proud, conceited, and selfish?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What occasion called forth the words of Jesus in Matt. xviii. 1? Note.
2. On what other occasion did Jesus refer to a child to illustrate his teaching?
3. What is meant by the phrase "*be converted*," in ver. 3? Note.
4. Explain ver. 4. Note.
5. What is meant by "*inherit the earth*," in ver. 5? Note.
6. In what sense do the meek really possess the earth? Same note.
7. Show the different ways in which humility was regarded by the pagans and by the Jews. § 1.
8. How did Jesus exalt this virtue? § 2.
9. Illustrate by the feelings of a child towards his parents. § 2.
10. How did Jesus still further reveal the glory of humility? § 3.
11. Tell the story of the art-student given in § 3.
12. How does that story illustrate the meaning and worth of humility?
13. Show how rendering service to others keeps a man humble. § 4.
14. Of the world's workers, who are always the humblest? § 5.
15. What has made them so?
16. Explain the French proverb "*Noblesse oblige*." § 5.
17. How does this apply to all men?
18. Show the indirect teaching of the virtue of humility from several of the former lessons of this series. § 6.
19. Why are not all children childlike? § 7.
20. What is the real judgment of the world upon humble and self-forgetting people as compared with the proud and conceited?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. True and false aggressiveness. 2. How can "good and faithful" servants be accounted unprofitable? 3. The meekness that is justly despised, — how illustrated in fiction?

LESSON XXVII.

SINCERITY.

Luke vii. 31–35; Matt. xxi. 28–31 (to the end of sentence "They say unto him the first").

GOLDEN TEXT. — He that doeth truth cometh to the light. — JOHN iii. 21.

THE MEANING.

Luke vii. 31. "*This generation,*" — that is, the people then living in Judæa.

Verse 32. "*The market-place.*" "Just inside the town — near the gate, if a town had walls around it — the streets met in the market-place. This was the place for business, news, and fun. Here, on some shady seat by the gate, the 'Elders' sat and gravely talked; here the laborers waited to be hired, and here the children played. Here, too, were the shops." (Gannett's "Childhood of Jesus," part iii. p. 6.) A lively description of scenes in the Jews' market-place is given by Delitsch in his "Jewish Artisan Life," pp. 58, 59.

"*Have piped unto you.*" This refers to the Jewish children playing wedding. The chief part of a Jewish wedding was the procession of the bridegroom and his friends to the house of the bride and the return of the company, including now the bride and her maidens and such other friends as joined the procession on the way to the bridegroom's house. This ceremony took place late in the evening, and the company all carried lamps in their hands. A band of musicians or singers went before them, and on the way back crowds of people pressed into the streets to see the sights and add to the noisy shouts of rejoicing. At the bridegroom's house the wedding-feast began, which sometimes lasted for many days. It is easy to see what a "jolly" game the children had when they played wedding in the long street of the village market-place.

"*Have mourned to you.*" Sometimes these Jewish children imitated a funeral procession. The dead were borne to the grave on an open bier, followed by the near relatives and friends, the mourning women (who had been hired to beat their breasts and sing songs of lamentation), and the musicians, playing dirges on the flute. The children probably played funeral by simply forming a procession and imitating the actions of the hired mourners. They may also have given a mock performance of the flute-playing. (See, for these children's plays, Gannett's "Childhood of Jesus," part iii. pp. 9 and 10.)

All this was childish sport; and, like children to-day, these Jewish boys and girls were continually disagreeing with one another, one set wishing to play wedding while another insisted on playing funeral.

Verse 33. "*Hath a devil;*" more correctly, "hath a *demon,*" — that is, he is a fanatic, is crazy.

Verse 34. "*Eating and drinking,*" as at the feast in the house of Levi and at the wedding in Cana.

"*A wine-bibber.*" As a term of reproach this was of course a slander against Jesus. Yet Jesus, unlike John, was eminently social. There was nothing peculiar in his mode of living.

Matt. xxi. 28. "*What think ye?*" This short parable is found only in Matthew. The question with which it begins refers to what Jesus has been saying to the Jews about the "authority" of John the Baptist.

"*Son.*" An affectionate address. We should indicate this by making the father call his son by his Christian name, as John, or Henry.

Verse 29. "*Repented.*" The Revised Version says, "*repented himself.*" The meaning is, rather, he was sorry. He had spoken hastily; but now that he has had time to think about it he feels remorse for what he said, and straightway goes to do his father's orders.

Verse 30. "*I go, Sir.*" The very forms of speech here show hypocritical submission and respect. "I,"—of course *I* will go. "*Sir,*"—in marked contrast to the rude "I won't" of the impulsive brother. "Went not." He broke his promise,—a promise given with insincerity. The explanation of the direct bearing of this parable is given in the Teaching. Its general application is obvious enough.

THE TEACHING.

1. "SINCERITY," says Carlyle,—"a deep, great, genuine sincerity,—is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic." But Jesus would have every man a hero in the warfare of life, and so we find him repeatedly enforcing the duty of being sincere. How warmly he praises Nathanael, in whom he saw a man "without guile"! How lovingly he looks upon the rich young man who had come to him with an honest purpose to learn the way to "eternal life"! How well he knew that Peter, in spite of all the generous, impetuous, noble, timid, and seemingly ever-wavering impulses of his disposition, was yet a "rock" of genuineness, sincere in his glorification, as in his rebuke, of Jesus, and most of all sincere in his great repentance when the arrow of his Master's loving glance (Jesus "turned and looked on Peter") pierced his inmost soul! Consider, also, the prominence which Jesus gives in his discourses to this indispensable virtue of sincerity. Those who are promised the beatific vision of God (Matt. v. 8) are the pure in heart,—they who are not only "chaste as morning dew," but as transparent as the clear deeps of a mountain lake. On the other hand, what words of holy indignation fell from his lips in awful rebuke of the men who were mere *actors* in religion,—the "hypocrites" whose outward show of piety and philanthropy, united with the hollow untruth and unreality of all their professions, turned sweet religion into a "rhapsody of words," and made of the religious life a ghastly ruin! No wonder that such insincerity moved him to say that the men and women who in the world's estimation were the worst of sinners had a better chance to enter the kingdom of heaven than these pious pretenders. In their rude "I will not" was more of hope and promise than in the hypocrites' smooth "I go, Sir."

2. But not in word alone did Jesus set forth the excellence of sincerity. He *was* what he taught. When the enraged and scoffing Jews asked of him, "Who art thou?" he answered them in substance, "What I say to you, that essentially I am" (John viii. 25), or, in the words which we find in the margin of the Revised Version at this verse: "*I am altogether that which I also speak unto you.*" "The great novelty," says Dean Church, "was that Jesus was in earnest; that he put the real meaning to what others taught and handed down in words. The *example* which he showed was something the world had not yet seen." "So perfectly," says Dr. Morison, "was Jesus, in his daily thoughts and acts and in his entire being, bound up with what is highest in morals and religion, that he comes to us as the illustration and embodiment of what he taught." It is not the single act of goodness, but the good man that shines like a candle of the Lord in this "naughty world;" and he who came "a light into the world," in whose life "was

the light of men," was sincerity itself. "Such fulness with such purity was never seen besides upon the earth." And the light of that holy life is a light-enkindling light, because the radiance that streams from it to touch and illumine all other human hearts is the *pure white light of a soul that was sincere.*

3. One form of the insincerity which Jesus rebuked is admirably pictured in our first lesson-passage (Luke viii. 31–35). Under the pleasing emblem of a scene from a market-place, where the children are playing at marriages and funerals, and hardly know their own minds as they try first one and then the other of their games, Jesus vividly conveys the idea that the men of that time, and especially the more religious people, the Pharisees, were merely playing at religion. Their piety was all a make-believe piety. For a while they had followed after John the Baptist. But instead of seeing in him the very greatest of all the Jewish prophets, and listening with open minds to his stirring religious appeals, they soon turned away from him with as much levity and scorn as if they had been men who made no professions of any interest in religion. And when they heard the gracious and merciful words which Jesus addressed to the sinful, they had just as little sympathy with his tenderness and compassion as they had shown toward the severity and sternness of the Baptist. They were like self-willed children, — "everything by turns and nothing long," changeable in their humor and fickle of temper, just because they were never in earnest, but were only amusing themselves with pious works.

4. The insincerity of these old-time Pharisees is still further brought to light in the short parable of the *Two Sons.* In this picturesque story we see a son grown to man's estate, old enough therefore to realize his responsibilities and to be ready to respond to the call of duty. Yet when the call is given, — when a task is assigned him, not by a severe task-master but by a loving father, — this son does nothing but promise. He says, "I go, Sir," using the smooth forms of speech which every hypocrite so glibly employs, but in his heart he means all the time not to go. Exactly of this evil disposition, with this black heart of insincerity, were the Scribes and Pharisees of that day. No wonder that Jesus told them that the very dregs of the populace — the rude men and coarse women who at first turned away from the gospel's invitations with a prompt "I will not," yet afterward repented and accepted the offered grace — were nearer the kingdom of heaven than such self-satisfied but hollow-hearted zealots as they had shown themselves to be.

5. While nothing can so well excite our dislike of insincere people as to see their characters plainly pictured in all their hateful features, the beauty of a frank, sincere, and loyal spirit always attracts us and makes us desirous of cultivating so lovely a virtue. In "Tom Brown's School Days," one of the best books ever written for boys, we are told of a little fellow at the boarding-school who had to sleep in a large room with a number of bigger boys. Young Arthur felt very shy and lonely, for he had never been away from home before. But there was one thing which he did with a fearless frankness that won the admiration of every manly spirit among the older boys. He knelt down just before he got into bed and quietly said his prayer, just as he had been taught to do at home, not stopping to think what the others might say about him, but being simply loyal to what his own heart told him was the right thing to do. And though he was faithful to a little duty because he was true-hearted, and not because he thought he would gain some reward, he *was* rewarded by the helpful and beautiful friendship of Tom Brown himself, whose nobler nature was deeply touched at the sight of such sincerity.

6. Reference was made in § 6 of Lesson XXIV. to those religious sculptors of the Middle Ages who would do no imperfect work, even in those parts of their statues which were removed from human sight. Equally sincere, — that is, honest and faithful, — in their work were many of the religious painters whose pictures we see in the churches and convents of Europe. One of these painters, known to us by the name of Fra Angelico, frescoed the walls of the small and dimly lighted cells in the Convent of

St. Mark at Florence with exquisite pictures, as carefully and beautifully painted as if they had been designed for a public gallery. The holy artist well knew that not many eyes would look upon these pictures; but into each one of them he put his whole soul, painting every separate picture as if that work alone were the one work God had called him to do. When I saw those beautiful frescos I repeated Emerson's lines, and thought of this thorough and faithful artist as a man who —

> "Wrought in a sad sincerity,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Himself from God he could not free."

7. The thought which so often comes to the religious man, "Thou, God, seest me," is a powerful incentive to loyalty and sincerity; yet the duty of being sincere commends itself also to the conscience of every one who knows what pure and noble satisfactions a true *self-respect* always gives. We can no more free ourselves from ourselves than we can set ourselves free from God. Each one of us is his own judge, and within every man is the unseen tribunal before which his thoughts are ever accusing or excusing him. A self-respecting man will do nothing which he is afraid or ashamed to have others know about; for his sincerity will *begin at home.* He will first be true to himself, and then he cannot be false to others. He will have no secret faults. In the inner chambers of his soul there will be no dreaded "skeleton," such as is said to be in every house, — some hidden sin that lays a heavy hand on a man just because it is concealed and must not be sent forth into the light. To the man who is sincere of speech, true of heart, and loyal in every act of life, we may apply the lines of Coleridge, in which the poet sings the praises and celebrates the happiness of those who are great in simply being good: —

> "Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
> The good great man? three treasures, — love, and light,
> And *calm thoughts*, regular as infants' breath;
> And three firm friends, more sure than day or night, —
> *Himself*, his Maker, and the angel Death?"

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Socrates, being asked the way to honest fame, said, "Study to be what you wish to seem."

Put it out of the power of truth to give you an ill character. — MARCUS ANTONINUS.

Faithfulness and sincerity are the highest things. — CONFUCIUS.

Truth hath a quiet breast. — SHAKSPEARE.

And simple truth his utmost skill. — SIR HENRY WOTTON.

The truth shall make you free. — JOHN viii. 32.

If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another. — 1 JOHN i. 7.

Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. — 1 COR. v. 8.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Describe a Jewish market-place. Note on Luke vii. 32.
2. How did Jewish children "play wedding"? Same note.
3. How did they "play funeral"? Same note.
4. Explain ver. 33. Note.
5. Why did the Jews call Jesus a "*winebibber*"? Note on ver. 34.
6. Relate the parable given in Matt. xxi. 28–31.
7. What does ver. 29 mean? Note.
8. How did the two answers given in ver. 30 show the characters of the two sons? Note.
9. What men did Jesus love and commend for their sincerity? § 1.
10. What is the beatitude of the "pure in heart"?
11. Show how Jesus is an example to us of sincerity. § 2.

12. How do the "children playing in the market-place" illustrate the character of the Jews of whom Jesus spoke? § 3.
13. What is taught in the parable of the Two Sons? § 4.
14. Tell the story from "Tom Brown's School Days." § 5.
15. Tell about the paintings of Fra Angelico. § 6.
16. What thought keeps a religious man sincere? § 7.
17. How will self-respect help us to be sincere? § 7.
18. Repeat the lines at end of § 7.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Describe a Jewish market-place. Note on Luke vii. 32.
2. Describe the plays of Jewish children. Same note.
3. How do these plays illustrate a trait of character in the Jews which Jesus rebuked? § 3.
4. Explain ver. 33. Note.
5. *How* did the "Son of Man" come "eating and drinking"? Note on ver. 34.
6. Why was Jesus called a wine-bibber? Same note.
7. What was the occasion of the parable related in Matt. xxi. 28–31? Note on ver. 28.
8. What is the meaning of ver. 29? Note.
9. How are the characters of the two sons revealed by the form of their replies in ver. 30? Note.
10. What did Carlyle say of sincerity? § 1.
11. Who were the men that Jesus loved and praised for being sincere? § 1.
12. Do you think Peter was a sincere man?
13. What is meant by being "*pure* in heart"?
14. Whom did Jesus rebuke with "holy indignation"? § 1.
15. Show how Jesus *exemplified* sincerity. § 2.
16. Who were typified by the two sons in the parable? § 4.
17. Give the illustration of sincerity that is related in § 5.
18. How did Fra Angelico show the same virtue? § 6.
19. How will self-respect keep a man sincere? § 7.
20. Recite Coleridge's lines quoted in § 7.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The insincerity of the religious teachers among the Jews at the time of Christ. 2. The strongest motive to sincerity. 3. The need of sincerity and genuineness in common life and in the *work* that men do.

LESSON XXVIII.

WATCHING AGAINST TEMPTATION.

Matt v. 13 and xxvi. 36–4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Watch and Pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. — Matt. xxvi. 41.

THE MEANING.

Matt. vi. 13. "*Lead us not into temptation.*" The Revised Version reads, "*Bring* us not," etc. Many persons find it hard to understand how it can be said, or even thought, that God ever brings, or leads, His children into temptation. They call to mind the strong language of James i. 13, "*God tempteth no man.*" They appeal to the common sense of mankind, which regards those who lead others into temptation as base and evil. How then, they ask, can we pray to God not to do that which He cannot do if He is good? Does not this language of Jesus admit of a different interpretation, and should we not rather say, in our petition to the All-holy One, "*Suffer us not to be brought into temptation*"?

These questions call for an explanation of both the thought and the language of the passage before us. First as to the thought. There is no reference here to those inward evil desires which entice a man and cause him to *consent* to be led astray (see § 2 of the Teaching). But the deep underlying thought is the sense of human weakness in the presence of the allurements of evil. The man who is profoundly conscious of this weakness will cry out not only to be saved from evil-doing, but, if possible, to be saved from the conflict with evil. He will feel with respect to the serpent-charm of sin, as he feels at the approach of any great sorrow. We know there is healing in sorrow's bitter cup; yet our human nature involuntarily cries, "If it be possible, let *this* cup pass from me." We know, too, that there is poison in the cup which sin presses to our lips, — that at the last it *biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.* And so, because all experience shows how prone men are to put this poison of evil to their lips, we cry out, from the depths of our weakness, that this cup, too, *may not be placed within our reach.*

Secondly, as to the language of this petition. Deep feeling always goes straight to its object, without stopping to discriminate nicely in the choice of the words it employs. The devout heart recognizes God in all things. He puts the cup of sorrow into our trembling hands, and it is He who ordains the trials and the conflicts out of which comes the strength of a tested manhood. The natural form of a prayer that voices the shrinking of the humbled soul from any new contest with the dread power of evil is that which is given us here, — the direct appeal to God: Bring us not into conflict with evil . . . rather deliver us from it altogether.

Matt. xxvi. 36. "*Gethsemane,*" a Hebrew word meaning "oil-press." It was probably an enclosed olive-yard at the western slope of the Mount of Olives beyond the brook Kedron.

Verse 37. "*The two sons of Zebedee,*" — that is, James and John. These two disciples, with Peter, had been witnesses of the Transfiguration of their Master.

Verse 38. "*Sorrowful unto death.*" An old Commentator renders this phrase, "I am even like to die for sorrow." Into the cause of this agony of Jesus we cannot fully enter. The earthly lot of the Saviour was that of a "Man

of Sorrows;" and the thought of the Cross to which he was now drawing near, of the betrayal by Judas, the denial by Peter, and the desertion of all the other disciples, — the anticipated indignities and sufferings of a crucifixion, — and, deeper than all else, the sadness of a heart that felt the sufferings which sin brings upon men, as if they were his own, — made up that "Sorrow's crown of sorrow" which was piercing his soul as no crown of thorns would afterward pierce his weary head! No wonder that he prayed that the cup might pass from him, — that out of his very sympathy with others, which had met with so faint a response, he should ask these drowsy companions to stay near him, and for a little while keep guard with him against the swiftly gathering danger!

Verse 40. "*Unto Peter*," who had promised most. "*Lest ye enter into temptation.*" The temptation was at hand, and to resist it body and soul should both be awake. Maurice well says: "When Jesus rises and bids the disciples pray that they may not enter into temptation, it is as if he, who was always tempted, then knew for the first time the whole meaning of temptation."

THE TEACHING.

1. Our *Golden Text* sets before us the duty which this lesson is to explain, — the duty of constant watchfulness against temptation. It also assigns the reason why we should be watchful: "*The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" In the writings of St. Paul the Greek word translated "flesh" means the lower part of man's nature as the seat of evil passions and desires, — the "fleshly mind," as it is once called. In the words which Jesus addressed to Peter in Gethsemane, the "flesh" is simply the *body*, which is often so weak as to defeat the purpose of the spirit. Yet, as this weakness is caused, in part, by the lack of certain elements which give stability to the good impulses of the heart, and make the soul the master over the infirmities of the senses, the word "flesh," as Jesus here used it, may be understood as having reference to that side of our moral nature which is most readily influenced by the objects of sense in general. The sleepiness of the disciples in the Garden was, no doubt, owing to their grief, their weariness, and their intense excitement, which naturally sought relief in slumber. But they had been told beforehand to watch; and the words of Jesus — "the flesh is weak" — were spoken "not to palliate their failure, but to point out the peril of it." This weakness, which is never to be urged to excuse our yielding to temptation, is to be kept ever in mind as the reason why we should be on our guard and "watching unto prayer."

2. The clearest statement of the nature of temptation, which the Bible gives us, is found in the Epistle of James, chap. i. verses 12–15: —

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which *the Lord* promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed.

"Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death."

This account of the way into which a man falls into temptation seems, at first sight, to be at variance with the common explanation that is given of the conduct of those who follow evil courses. Of such persons we say: "They were enticed into sin; evil companions led them astray." Now, while it is true that bad people lie in wait to entice the unwary, and while every young person should beware of evil companionship, it is the sad fact that the majority of those who are led astray are led astray by themselves, by their own evil thoughts and imaginations. As St. James forcibly expresses it, "*They are drawn away by their own lust*," — that is, by the sinful desires which they have suffered to grow up in their own hearts. In a sermon "On the Sin of being led Astray," Dr. Walker makes

three strong statements, which, however, are no stronger than the facts of human experience will justify. First, he says, a large proportion of those who have been led astray suffered themselves to be led by others, whether through the possession of a natural taste for some vice or through the influence of a morbid curiosity to know what the vice is. Secondly, these persons *put themselves in the way of temptation.* The bad companions did not seek them out, but they sought out the bad company. And, thirdly, it is a bad sign that a man should be singled out by others to be enticed into evil courses. Men of real principle, undoubted integrity, are never spoken to, are never thought of, in this connection.

3. How then, it may be asked, are the young to be made watchful against this form of temptation which consists in their *consenting* to be led astray? One thing they should early learn, — to prize as a treasure that is of inestimable value their *moral independence.* To be weak-willed is to be miserable. Moral strength constitutes man's personality. "It makes the distinction between a self-active being and one who moves only as he is moved." We may choose to follow some leader; but this is a very different thing from being led by another because he chooses to lead us. In this last case we give up that which makes us men, — our moral independence. Not to be morally independent of those about us is to suffer ourselves to be mere driftwood on the currents of life, always floating one way, instead of being like a noble ship that moves as a "thing of life" because it has the power in itself to go either with or against the current.

4. Another way to keep one's self from yielding to temptation is always to *resist its first beginnings.* Everybody has power enough to overcome an evil desire when it is first suggested, to stifle an improper suggestion when it is first made, to refuse to entertain a bad thought when it knocks at the door of the mind for admission there. It is because we fail to see the importance of these first steps that we so often find ourselves becoming the slaves of thoughts and feelings which after a while almost compel us to do their bidding. Read this old Arabian fable, which is here in point: —

"One cold night a camel, fastened by a long tether, thrust his nose into his master's tent and said, 'It is very cold; let me put my nose within the tent.' And the indulgent master consented. Then the camel said, 'It grows colder; let me thrust in my whole head.' Growing presumptuous, he at length pushed in the whole length of his crooked neck, and finally the entire bulk of his uncouth and ill-savored body. And when the master, remonstrating, said, 'There is not room enough for me and thee,' the camel replied: 'It is verily so. You may go out of the tent; I shall remain.'"

The moral of the fable is easily read: *Say "No!" to the first beginnings of temptation.* Bad endings always come of bad beginnings; but we have only ourselves to blame if we give the bad beginning a chance.

5. Still, though we should strive to keep ourselves from being led astray by governing our thoughts and keeping our imaginations pure, we yet live in a world from which we must be ever on our guard if we would be unspotted from its evils. Not to anticipate what will be said further on in other lessons about our *religious* duties, it is important for us to understand that we *owe it to ourselves* to act in all things from the highest motives. Merely to say that we will be watchful against the entrance of evil into our hearts, that we will resist every tempter that shall approach us, is not enough. We must so live as not to be *of* the world even while we live in it and are making its nearest duties our immediate concern. How can we do this except by having "*our citizenship in heaven,*" as St. Paul wrote to the Philippians? That is, we are to think of ourselves as immortal beings, beginning here a life that has no end. We are to remember that we are sons of God; and if sons, then heirs, princes of a Royal Divine Family. To walk worthy of our heavenly calling and our divine rank, *to have, as it were, the atmosphere of heaven about us* while doing our daily work, is the sure way to keep off the stains of the world's defilements. Jesus is in this our great exemplar. He came out unspotted from the great temptations which beset him at the outset of his pub-

lic career, because the force of his life-purpose was positive and not negative, — a purpose to live the life of God, and not merely to try not to live a life of worldly aims and ambitions. "He did not spend his life in trying not to do wrong; for he was too full of the earnest love and longing to do right, — to do his Father's will."

6. If we follow the example of Jesus, and "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," we shall naturally be led to make a Christlike dedication of ourselves to the world that will help still more to keep us from its evil. Doctors and nurses rarely catch the diseases which they are devoting themselves to cure; and while it would be very imprudent for the young and inexperienced to visit places of iniquity and scenes of evil with the hope of rescuing others, there is no one who may not consecrate his life, even in its early years, to a Christlike and loving service of unselfish labors for the good of others. Our pitying love for those who go astray will then be an invisible guard against the evil influences of their lives Our earnest longing that the world should be saved will keep us unspotted from its sins.

7. There are so many forms in which temptation comes to our minds that to write about them all would require a volume. But there is one form of evil which is so insidious in its attacks, and so deadly to the soul that is touched by its poisoned darts, that it should be most seriously considered by every young person. It is the sin that assails that precious jewel of the soul, *Purity*. A writer who knows how to speak of this sin in language that cannot offend, while it carries conviction to every candid reader, thus speaks on the subject: —

"Learn to hate all impurity or indelicacy of thought or speech or conduct.

"God has put into all of us a sense of modesty; it is both a grace and a protection.

"Nearly all I can say on this subject is this: respect and obey to the uttermost this divine law of modesty that you find in your minds; it is God's voice within you. I am sorry to say that young persons often make false distinctions on this subject. They will say to one another what they would not say to their parents; they will sometimes do that which they would blush to have known; they will read books and papers in secret that they know are unfit to be read and looked at; they indulge their imagination in thoughts that they would not utter; they will go just so far, but no farther.

"Now, there is but one rule on this subject for everybody, — boys and girls, men and women, old and young, — and that is, *keep a rigorous control over yourself in this matter*. I might put it in another form: *respect yourself*. Have a rule about it; don't speak of, don't listen to, don't read, don't countenance, anything forbidden by this law of modesty and purity. It is the glory of a man to have clean lips and a clean mind; it is the glory of a woman not to know evil even in her thoughts.

"There is a border-land of simple delicacy lying between purity and vice, where young people sometimes feel at liberty to wander farther than is best. The touch is not so respectful as it ought to be, and, if too familiar, is not resented so proudly as it ought to be. Young people often wander about rather carelessly in this border-land and come to no visible harm; but, after all, we do not like to see the down rubbed off from a peach, or even one petal of a rose crushed, or ever so slight a stain within the cup of a lily. But there is no fruit or flower in the world so sacredly beautiful as young womanhood, or deserves so delicate care to keep its glory and perfection. There is no treasure in this world so rich as the consciousness of utter purity; and in order to have it, one must keep one's self free from any contact that even seems to sully it. A woman should not only respect, but venerate herself as sacred, and therefore not to be touched, or spoken to, or treated otherwise than accords with this sacred purity. And a fine manliness shows itself in nothing more clearly than in a chivalrous respect for woman, — treating her always, and in every instance, with a delicacy that reaches to reverence."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

It is the bright day that brings forth the adder and that craves wary walking. — SHAKSPEARE.

I pray thee, O God, that I may be beautiful within. — SOCRATES.

He who has no mind to trade with the Devil should be so wise as to keep from his shop. — SOUTH.

My son, if sinners entice thee consent thou not. — PROV. i. 10.

Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. — 1 COR. x. 12.

We have a high priest that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. — HEB. iv. 15.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Why does the *form* of the petition "Lead us not into temptation" trouble some persons? Note on Matt. vi. 13.
2. What is said about this in the first paragraph of the small print in the note?
3. What is further said in the second paragraph?
4. If this explanation is not satisfactory, state why it is not.
5. Where was *Gethsemane*, and what is the literal meaning of the word? Note on Matt. xxvi. 36.
6. Give some of the reasons why Jesus was so sorrowful in Gethsemane. Note on ver. 38.
7. In the writings of St. Paul what does the word translated "flesh" usually mean? § 1.
8. What does this word mean in the *Golden Text?* § 1.
9. What did the Apostle James say about temptation? § 2.
10. What are the three statements made by Dr. Walker about persons who are led astray? § 2.
11. What do you think of these statements?
12. What is it to be "morally independent," and why is such independence to be cultivated? § 3.
13. What rule is laid down in the first sentence of § 4?
14. Tell the Arabian fable given in § 4.
15. What is meant by "*having our citizenship in heaven*," and how will that keep us out of temptation? § 5.
16. Show how serving others helps us to resist evil? § 6.
17. What is the particular kind of temptation that is considered in § 7?
18. What is the rule on this subject for everybody?
19. Apply what is said in § 4 to the temptations mentioned in the last part of § 7.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. How would some persons change the form of the petition "Lead us not into temptation"? Note on Matt. vi. 13.
2. Explain the real *thought* that underlies that petition. Same note.
3. Justify the language of the petition. Same note.
4. Is this an adequate explanation? and if not, why not?
5. Meaning and locality of *Gethsemane?*
6. Give some of the causes of the agony of Jesus in the Garden? Note on Matt. xxvi. 38.
7. What is said, in the note on ver. 40, about the feeling of Jesus when he spoke the *Golden Text?*
8. What does the word "flesh" mean as it is used so often by St. Paul? § 1.
9. What is its meaning in the *Golden Text?* § 1.
10. Is such weakness excusable?
11. How does St. James explain the nature of temptation? § 2.
12. Are men led astray against their own will or without their own consent?
13. What three "strong statements" on this point did Dr. Walker make? § 2.
14. What *is* "moral independence," and why is it "of inestimable value"? § 3.
15. Give the rule laid down in § 4, and the fable that illustrates it.
16. How will it help us to keep ourselves from evil by "*having our citizenship in heaven*"? § 5.
17. How is serving others a safeguard against temptation? § 6.
18. What insidious form of temptation is discussed in § 7?
19. What "rule for everybody" is there laid down?
20. What dangerous "border-land" is there described?
21. What is the dictate of true manliness on this subject? of true womanliness?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The language of prayer emotional and not logical. 2. The "sin of being led astray." 3. Milton's "Comus," the poem that glorifies purity.

LESSON XXIX.

MORAL COURAGE.

Matt. x. 16–31 (Revised Version).

GOLDEN TEXT.—Be not afraid of them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul.—Matt. x. 28.

THE MEANING.

Verse 16. The preceding verses (5–15 of this chapter) apply exclusively to the first mission of the Twelve Apostles. With verse 16 the second part of the discourse begins, ı contains instructions that were equally ɔle for their later ministry. The burden ɪ tnis part of the discourse is, Fear not, be rave! "*As sheep in the midst of wolves.*" The rolves were all those who would persecute and ɔitefully use the "heralds of the cross."

"*Be wise as serpents . . . harmless as doves.*" True courage is to be distinguished from rashness, and must not be accompanied by duplicity. The serpent is the type of wisdom, the dove of simplicity. The disciple of Jesus should be simple,—that is, sincere, without guile or double-dealing; and he should also be wary,—that is, be on his guard, run into no unnecessary dangers, and never *court* persecution.

Verse 17. "*Councils.*" The local courts in the Jewish towns, which tried men for heresy and other offences.

Verse 18. "*Governors and kings.*" All kinds of rulers and magistrates are meant. The Apostles would be brought before civil tribunals, as well as before the church courts "in the synagogues."

Verse 19. "*Be not anxious,*"—that is, do not distress yourselves about it. Be of a good courage, stand up fearlessly for the truth, and you need not fear that the right words will not c to you.

Verse 20. "*The spirit of your Father.*" The man who fears God and knows no other fear will often feel that the divine Spirit "beareth witness" with his spirit.

Verses 21, 22. These words have often been literally fulfilled in the persecutions suffered by the disciples of Christ.

"*He that endureth,*" etc. Endurance is the test of courage. One must not only begin by being brave, he must be brave *to the end.*

"*Shall be saved,*" from the evils which will befall the unfaithful.

Verse 23. "*Flee into another,*"—a precept which shows that Christian courage is not rashness or over-confidence; as if Jesus had said, "Bear persecutions when they needs must come; but avoid strife and keep out of the way of hostile men when you can do more good by going elsewhere."

"*Till the Son of Man come,*"—that is, till the kingdom of the Messiah be established. The reference here is to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which would be "the beginning of the end" of the old order of things.

Verse 25. "*Beelzebub,*" the prince of false gods, or lord of idols. In Matt. xii. 24 we are told that the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons by the aid of this "prince of the demons."

Verse 27. "*On the housetops.*" The flat roofs of houses in Palestine made the best

kind of a pulpit from which to address the people.

Verse 29. "*Fear him,*" etc. It ought not to be a hard matter to understand this saying. The Being who has power over both the soul and the body is God. "He can create and He destroy." We are always to fear God rather than man, — that is, be more afraid of disobeying Him than of incurring the enmity of men. "*Both soul and body in hell.*" The meaning of the word *Gehenna*, translated "*hell*," was fully explained in Lesson V. of this Series (p. 23). The literal punishment of a criminal in the burning valley near Jerusalem was a symbol of the severest penalty that could be inflicted upon the soul that sinneth. Jesus would have his disciples stand in awe before the righteous Judge of all the earth, and not be guilty of the enormous sin of being faithless to duty from fear of man.

THE TEACHING.

1. THOSE who would have us see in Jesus a man who taught and practised only the so-called passive virtues — meekness, forbearance, long-suffering, non-resistance — show us but one side of his character and his teachings. He did indeed emphasize those virtues which both Jews and Gentiles were only too apt to neglect. But the perfect *manliness* of Jesus is as clearly to be seen in the Gospels as is his tenderness. There is no flaw on his courage any more than on his sympathy or his love. If the simple reading of the Gospel record is not enough to bring the figure of Jesus before the mind as the perfect ideal of true courage, let the student turn to the little volume by Thomas Hughes, entitled "The Manliness of Christ," and find in that the facts of his life so sifted and weighed as to convince even the most sceptical that the "meek and lowly Nazarene" was also the bravest and most heroic of the sons of men.

2. And what he was, that he also taught. His Apostles, who had at first the natural timidity of men that are not prepared for great trials and heroic daring, were *trained* by their Master both to do and to suffer "for righteousness' sake." They were taught that for every individual life is a warfare; that no man can either be good or do good without fighting manfully against the sinful desires that press upon him from within and the temptations to evil that beset him from without. But beyond this, these first disciples were taught that the special life-work to which Jesus had called them would require a higher courage and a stronger loyalty than the world had yet seen, even in the lives of its noblest heroes. For they were to be the apostles of a spiritual and universal religion, and under its banner to fight against the religious leaders of their own nation. They were to hold the truth *in love*, and show forth to an unbelieving world the MIGHT as well as the BEAUTY of a loving spirit. They were to toil for a kingdom that has its seat of power in the human heart, and comes without observation, — the unseen kingdom of the things that are eternal.

3. Our lesson-passage is taken from one of the most instructive of all the discourses which Jesus addressed directly to his Apostles, — to the men who were *sent forth* (for this is the literal meaning of the word *apostle*) to bear witness to the truths of his religion.

"'Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves,' said Jesus. This shows what faith he had in the power of truth and goodness. He charged the disciples to go among fierce and wicked people, doing no evil, not speaking or even thinking the least violence, and by their noble words and pure conduct shame men out of passion and wrong-doing. He knew what the experience of the world has proved, that a good example has more power than any amount of teaching to win people toward the right.

"But they must be wise as serpents while they were harmless as doves; must keep out of danger as much as they could, and must not make a parade of their virtues, for that would only anger men the more. With all their caution, however, they would probably be sometimes arrested for teaching ideas contrary to the general belief. At such times the Spirit of God would teach them what to say before the judge in their own defence. And if the judge, unmoved by their plea, refused to set them at liberty, what could

he do to them? At most he could only order them to be killed. He could not touch their souls, or take away the reward that was laid up for them in heaven. 'Be not afraid of that which harms the body only, but be afraid of that which harms the immortal soul,' —namely, desertion of duty. It was like saying, '*Be more fearful of being a coward than you are of death itself.*' "—BROWN'S *Life of Jesus for Young People*, pp. 100, 101.

4. Instances of moral courage shine like stars in the firmament of history. Tales of heroism make the enchanted land of literature. These lives of brave men ought to "make our lives sublime;" and they would if we were only inspired by what we admire. What heroes conscience has made of men, — the conscience which, by keeping alive the fear of evil, lifts a man above all other fear! This it was that gave to Bayard his noble title of "the fearless and the blameless knight." It was the *stainless courage* of this hero that won for him his name and the world's admiration. In like nner a conscience for *truth* has inspired the most heroic daring. This made Paul the bravest of Apostles. It gave Luther the strength to declare that he would "enter the city of Worms in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, though as many devils should oppose me as there are tiles upon all the houses at Worms." It nerved John Knox to tell the Queen and her attendant lords that he cared not what they did to his body, he should go on preaching the truth.

5. And then a conscience for *humanity* has pired a courage before which all other kinds ot bravery must yield the palm. This it was which enabled John Brown to walk cheerfully to the scaffold; and not only to say to the sheriff who accompanied him that he had never known what fear was, but also to add that he was thankful that he had been allowed to die for the cause of human freedom, and not merely to pay the debt of Nature as all must. Consider, too, the wreck of the ship "Birkenhead," where four hundred men calmly accepted death that the women and children might be got off safely in the boats. Think of the firemen who go through smoke and flame to save life, knowing that they are taking their own lives in their hands as they rush to the rescue of others. Think of the brave engineers who have stood at the post of danger with hand on the engine's throttle till they were scalded to death by the escaping steam, while the lives of the passengers were saved because the engine had been stopped.

6. The examples cited show that the quality of a man's courage depends upon the character of the motive that incites it. "Courage can only rise to true manliness when the will is surrendered." In other words, the self-renouncing love, which in previous lessons has been shown to be the animating principle of the Christian life, is the inspiration of the manliest courage. To give up something that others may be made better or happier, that some righteous cause may be advanced, that witness may be given to the truth,— this always requires moral courage. The field for its activity is our common daily lives. Men, yes, and children, too, are cowardly in a hundred ways simply because they do not love truth and righteousness and purity and peace more than all else. We shrink from doing right because we fear what other people may say of us. We are more afraid of the sneers of our companions than we are of doing wrong. We are not independent enough to have "the courage of our convictions." We are the slaves of custom or of fashion or of the low public opinion of those around us; and so, instead of showing the bravery of freemen, we display a slave's cowardice and compliance. We fear the judgments of others more than we fear to stand—

> "Each before the judgment-throne
> Of his own awful soul."

When evil solicits us, we lack the manly courage to say "No!" and when the opportunity is given us to do some noble action, we let "I dare not" wait upon "I would." Is not the root of all our cowardice a want of sincerity, —the lack of that genuine love to God and love to man which gives one courage to "dare all that becomes a man"? Christian courage is the virtue of those who have "the mind of Christ."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

God is the brave man's hope, and not the coward's excuse. — PLUTARCH.

Unbounded courage and compassion, joined,
Make the hero and the man complete.
ADDISON.

I dare all that may become a man; who dares do more is none. — SHAKSPEARE.

Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. — PSALM xxvii. 14.

Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. — JOHN xvi. 33.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things. — REV. xxi. 7.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. From what discourse of Jesus is the *Golden Text* taken? Note on ver. 16.
2. Of what is the serpent a type, and of what the dove? Same note.
3. To what kinds of trial do verses 17 and 18 refer? Notes.
4. What test of courage is given in ver. 22? Note.
5. If Jesus was trying to infuse courage into the hearts of his first followers, why did he tell them to flee when persecuted? Note on ver. 23.
6. What was meant by the expression, "till the Son of Man comes"? Same note.
7. Explain ver. 25. Note.
8. Explain ver. 27. Note.
9. Give a full explanation of ver. 29. Note.
10. What are some of the "passive virtues" which Jesus taught and practised? § 1.
11. What was the *other side* of his character and teachings? § 1.
12. What did the first disciples teach on the subject of courage and manliness? § 2.
13. Explain the phrase, "sheep in the midst of wolves," and show what it meant as Jesus used it. § 3.
14. *Why* were the disciples to be "wise as serpents," etc.? § 3.
15. What did Jesus tell them to be afraid of? § 3, last part.
16. Give some of the instances of moral courage mentioned in § 4, and tell what you know about the lives of these men.
17. What instances of the "courage of humanity" are given in § 5?
18. What is it that inspires the noblest courage? § 6.
19. Why are so many people cowards about doing right? § 6.
20. What is the *root* of such cowardice? § 6, last part.
21. Who possess "Christian courage"? § 6, last sentence.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Give an analysis of Matt. x. 5–31. Note on ver. 16.
2. Explain the phrases, "wise as serpents," "harmless as doves." Same note.
3. By whom would the Apostles be persecuted? Notes on verses 17, 18.
4. What test of courage is given in ver. 22? Note.
5. Explain both parts of ver. 23. Note.
6. Who was Beelzebub, and why was he mentioned here? Note on ver. 25.
7. Explain fully ver. 29. Note.
8. What are the *two* sides of the character and teachings of Jesus that we see in the Gospels? § 1.
9. What do you think of Jesus as a man of courage, — a *manly* man?
10. How did he train his Apostles in manly courage? § 2.
11. Give in your own words the *paraphrase* of our lesson-passage quoted in § 3, from Brown's "Life of Jesus."
12. Tell the instances of moral courage mentioned in § 4, and give some account of Bayard, Luther, and John Knox.
13. Show by examples what courage a "conscience for humanity" has inspired. § 5.
14. Who was John Brown, and what do you think of his life and character?
15. When does courage rise to true manliness? § 6.
16. Why are there so many moral cowards in the world? § 6.
17. Of what do many men stand most in fear? § 6.
18. What is the root of their cowardice? § 6, last part.
19. Who possess Christian courage? § 6, last sentence.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The manliness of Christ. 2. Hero-worship, — is there any danger from it if the heroes are *moral* heroes? 3. What is it to have the courage of one's convictions?

LESSON XXX.

COUNTING THE COST.

Matt. vii. 24–27; Luke xiv. 28–32.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Whosoever doth not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.—Luke xiv. 27.

THE MEANING.

Matt. vii. 24. "*Upon a rock.*" The contrast between "rock" and "sand," as a foundation to build upon, was very striking to the hearers of the Sermon on the Mount, who lived in a land of mountain-torrents and sudden, violent, and destructive floods. But we shall miss the real meaning of these words of Jesus if we try to make the rock and the sand, the wind and the rains, in the short parable, represent particular details of the Christian life. The simple point of the teaching is that a wise builder—whether of a house or of his own character—will make the foundation a matter of serious consideration; while a foolish builder will act as if a foundation were a matter of no consequence. The wise man has forethought; the foolish man acts without it.

Verse 26. "*Doeth them not.*" Jesus makes a man's *life*, not his knowledge or even his religious profession, the test of goodness. Not to do our duty, or to set about doing it carelessly, as if it were no matter how we did it, is to expose ourselves to the danger of falling under the stress of trials and temptations.

Luke xiv. 28. "*Desiring to build a tower.*" Jesus had just been saying that if any man would become his disciple he *must put his whole heart into the work.* Nothing must be allowed to come between the soul and its rightful master. *Two* masters no man *can* serve. To be a "good soldier of Jesus Christ," one must be prepared to act a soldier's part, and suffer such hardships and privations as fall to a soldier's lot.

Jesus gives two illustrations of his meaning,—one drawn from the building of a tower, the other from the carrying on of a war.

Verse 29. Some critics think that Jesus had in mind the attempt of Pilate to build a tower in connection with an aqueduct, and his failure to complete it.

Verse 30. Men are usually mocked and ridiculed when they do not hold out as they began,—when their promises are large and the fulfilment is small.

Verse 31. "*What king?*" Reference may have been made to contemporary history. "Herod, the King," or Tetrarch, of Galilee, had been involved in a war with an Arabian king, in which his own army was destroyed.

Verse 32. The lesson which is enforced by this verse is that the man who fails to do *thoroughly* what he undertakes will have to put up with the consequences of his slackness. To have to submit to the opposing general on such terms as *he* may be pleased to dictate, is a very humiliating end of a military campaign.

THE TEACHING.

1. MANY teachings of Jesus enforce the need of wisely counting the cost. In the midst of the discourse to the disciples wherein he incites them to fear God and know no other fear (Matt. x. 16–33), he bids them also be as wary as serpents. They are not to be afraid of any persecutors, neither are they to court or invite persecution. Again, when he talks to the multitude who were ignorantly following him as if they thought the journey to Calvary would be like going on a holiday excursion, he cautions them to act as prudent men who count the cost of their enterprise before they undertake it. As it would be the height of folly for a man to begin a building — a tower or a house — without having first considered whether he could finish it, or for a king to go to war against an army that he knew to be twice as strong as his own, so was it foolish for these people to cry out, "We will follow thee, Lord, whithersoever thou goest," when they had no intelligent idea of what they were promising, and had never stopped to forecast the dangers and difficulties that beset the "way of the Cross."

2. The truths conveyed in these two short parables (Luke xiv. 28–32) were specially addressed to the people whom Jesus wished to warn against a too hasty discipleship. But very much of what he said with reference to the needs and duties of those about him is of universal application. Our tasks are not the same as those which the first disciples were called to perform, but life is as real and as earnest now as it was then. Character-building is a work as important for us to do as it was for those who walked with Jesus. Of those who heard from the lips of Jesus the original statement of the Christian ideal of goodness given in the Sermon on the Mount, the Master said, "Some of these hearers I will liken to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand, but others to a wise man who put *his* house upon a rock." Yet this parable of the Two Builders shows us the separation into two distinct classes of those who to-day are either hearers and doers, or hearers only, "deluding their own selves."

The same lesson, then, is taught us in the three short but graphic parables, — that of the house-builders, that of the maker of the unfinished tower, and that of the king who leads forth to battle an inadequate force. This lesson is that in building character we must count the cost and act with a wise forethought.

3. This means for us, in the first place, that in trying to live the true life we should realize not only that the race comes before the prize, the cross before the crown, but also that the race will be long and hard, and the cross may be heavy and sharp. No teacher of morals ever told men that it is easy to be virtuous. The wise men, the sages and prophets, of every nation and every time, have ransacked Nature and human life for figures to illustrate the difficulty of leading a life of righteousness and true holiness. To the young — to those who stand at life's opening gate, "with the rays of morn on their white Shields of Expectation" — these teachers do not say, "The strife will be easy; the foe may frighten, but cannot conquer you." What they say is, "The fight will be long and arduous; ten thousand foes will rise up against you, your own weak will and the traitor heart within your breast the most dangerous of them all."

4. If religion said anything different from this about the cost of a noble manhood, we should at once distrust her teachings. For there is nothing that men consider worth having which is won without difficulty and effort. Of money, we say that what a man gets easily he loses quickly; that is, the money which comes to a man by inheritance, or is got by gambling or speculation, has but little value for him, and so is likely to be foolishly spent, and in the end to prove a curse rather than a blessing. So with knowledge. However gifted a man may be, he cannot become learned without being a hard and faithful student. The reason is that only by hard study can a man so develop and strengthen his faculties as to

be able to grasp and retain the truths which are set before him. In all life "progress is the child of struggle, and struggle is the child of difficulty."

5. But it will be said, Is not this way of looking at goodness discouraging to those who may wish to be good, and yet may well despair of fighting successfully in such a hard battle as you describe the fight for virtue to be? It all depends on what view one takes of discouragements. Is it a discouragement to a student to tell him that long years of hard mental toil lie between him and the goal of his honorable ambition? Would it discourage an artist to say to him that he must endure years of drudgery, and paint many worthless pictures, and perhaps soak his hard-earned crust of bread in the tears that will flow from the bitter sense of his failures, before he can become a great painter? Why then should it discourage the young to say to them, "This beautiful edifice of a noble Christlike character you must build by the patient toils, the daily self-denials, the constant prayers, the ceaseless watchings and strivings of a lifetime"? This is only saying in other words, "The Christian character is within your reach, and is worth all it will ever cost you."

6. For the man who was mocked for not finishing his tower, and the builder who saw his house washed away by the rain-storms, were not expected to do something which they were unable to do. What was expected of them was that they should do what they could do thoroughly. The man who left the tower unfinished might, with the same amount of money, have completed a less ambitious structure; and the foolish builder might have put his house on a rock if he had thought it worth while to build wisely and safely. The [illegible] we are required to strive after is a character which we not only know how to [illegible] have the materials to build with and the strength to shape into a noble structure. Too much is said now-a-days of human weakness; not enough of human strength. We are too ready to excuse the negligence that is without excuse, and to apologize for failures that need never have been made.

7. A great preacher, Dr. James Walker, once preached a sermon "On Keeping the Promises we Make to Ourselves." The lesson he enforced was this: Since nothing truly great and excellent can be attained in any calling unless a man prescribes to himself a particular line of conduct and adheres to it with constancy, this planning for the future and this resolve to be faithful to the end are in the nature of a promise which a man makes to himself. If he has not truthfulness and stability enough to keep such a promise, there is but little hope for him.

Each one of us, in striving to live the Christian life, will find many helps from the examples and the teachings of our fellow men. We shall also find that if we look up to God in prayer, He will give us strength proportioned to our needs. But the field on which each man is to fight the good fight is the silent battle-field of his own heart. There he is to tread down every evil passion and slay each sinful desire, each low and unworthy ambition; and it is *there* that he must arm himself for the fight. [illegible] reveal — a [illegible] too great a [illegible] [illegible] after it. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Character is *victory organized.* — BOVÉE.

Build castles in the air; that is where they should be. Only put foundations under them. — THOREAU.

In point of fact, things do *not* come any harder than God meant they should. — DR. WALKER.

Stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on. — PHIL. iii. 13.

Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. — HEB. xii. 1.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What short parable did Jesus use at the close of the Sermon on the Mount? Matt. vii. 24–27.
2. Why would the rocky and the sandy foundation be well understood by those who heard Jesus? Note on ver. 24.
3. What does this parable teach? Same note.
4. What does Jesus make the *test* of a man's goodness? Note on ver. 26.
5. What had Jesus been saying just before he told the parable in Luke xiv. 28? Note.
6. Why did people mock the man who left the "tower" unfinished? Ver. 30, and note.
7. To what event in Jewish history may ver. 31 refer? Note.
8. What is the lesson taught by ver. 32? Note.
9. Explain why Jesus told the parables in Luke xiv. 28–32 to the particular audience that heard him. § 1.
10. What is the one lesson taught *us* in the three parables of this lesson? § 2, last sentence.
11. What do all wise teachers say to us about the *battle of life?* § 3.
12. Which do men value most highly, — that which costs them much or that which costs but little?
13. Illustrate this by the getting of money and the gaining of knowledge. § 4.
14. Repeat the last sentence of § 4.
15. How do the parables of this lesson illustrate the truth that nothing is required of us which we are not able to do? § 6.
16. State in your own language what is said in § 7, last part, about the Christian life.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What is said in the first note about the words which Jesus used in Matt. vii. 24–32?
2. What is the simple teaching of that parable? Same note.
3. What does Jesus make the test of goodness? Note on ver. 26.
4. Explain the connection between Luke xiv. 28 and the preceding verses of the same chapter. Note.
5. What may have been the reference in ver. 29? Note.
6. When do men incur merited ridicule? Note on ver. 30.
7. To what war may Jesus have referred in ver. 31? Note.
8. What is the lesson enforced by ver. 32? Note.
9. *Why* did Jesus speak the parables in Luke xiv. 28–32 to that particular audience? § 1.
10. Show how the teachings of those parables apply to our lives to-day. § 2.
11. What teaching about the difficulty of right conduct have "all the sages" given? § 3.
12. Show how similar difficulties attend the pursuit of other ends. § 4.
13. Show that this way of looking at goodness is an incentive and not a discouragement. § 5.
14. Illustrate by the parables the truth that what is required of us is only that which we *can* do. § 6.
15. What is the title of the sermon referred to in § 7?
16. What lesson was taught in that discourse? § 7.
17. What is said in the last part of § 7 of life as a field of conflict, the helps the soldier has, and the end he fights for?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Reverencing the dreams of one's youth.
2. Seriousness of purpose compatible with a life of cheerfulness.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LESSONS XXI.-XXX.

FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What is it to love one's self as one's neighbor?
2. How is selfishness an abuse of self-love?
3. How does our selfishness hurt ourselves, and how does it injure others?
4. What *duty* is taught us in the parable of the Talents?
5. How does the true self-culture of the individual make society better?
6. Name some of the rewards of self-culture.
7. What was the object of sacrifices in the worship of the Jews and the heathen in ancient times?
8. When we "deny ourselves," *what* is it that we deny?
9. Give illustrations of self-denial.
10. Mention some of the acts of Jesus which show that he did good "hoping for nothing again."
11. Distinguish between the *motives* of right-doing and the *results*.
12. What lesson is taught us by the parable of the Hours?
13. Who are the four classes of hearers mentioned in the parable of the Sower?
14. How did Agassiz set beginners to work studying Nature, and how can this method be applied to the study of religion?
15. What is the "word of God" which in the parable of the Sower is called the "seed"?
16. How differently did pagans and Jews regard humility?
17. Tell the story of the art-student in § 3, Lesson XXVI.
18. Explain the French saying, "*Noblesse oblige.*"
19. Describe a Jewish market-place and the plays of Jewish children.
20. Relate the parable of the Two Sons, and explain its meaning.
21. Tell the story of young Arthur in "Tom Brown's School Days."
22. In the sentence "The flesh is weak," what does the word "flesh" mean?
23. If God never tempts men, why should we ask Him not to lead us into temptation?
24. Show how men are led astray by *consenting* to be enticed.
25. What is meant by the sentence, "Be not afraid of them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul"?
26. Give instances from history of moral courage.
27 Why are so many people cowards about doing right?
28. What lesson is taught by the parables of the Two Builders, the Unfinished Tower, and the King who went to War?
29. Why do men value most highly that which *costs* them most?
30. Why should we keep those promises that we make to ourselves?

FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. How is the duty of a true self-love taught by the "Second Commandment" of Jesus and by the parable of the Prodigal Son?
2. Justify the use of the phrase "caring for one's soul."
3. Quote sayings from Shakspeare on self-love.
4. Explain the general meaning of the parable of the Talents.
5. Give Mahomet's saying about "feeding the soul" and the parallel one from the New Testament.
6. What things "feed the soul"?
7. What made the life of Charles Lamb so noble?
8. Define self-sacrifice as the law of the Christian life.
9. Illustrate the truth that man's sonship is for the sake of the brotherhood.
10. What is taught us by the parable of the Hours?
11. Distinguish between rewards of goodness as results and as motives.
12. Why may disinterested goodness be called the "natural way of living"?

13. What is the lesson taught us in the parable of the Talents?
14. How can one possess the "noble and good heart" that receives the "word of God"?
15. Give instances of teachableness from the New Testament.
16. Explain the promise given to the meek in the Beatitude.
17. By what teachings did Jesus exalt the virtue of humility?
18. Explain and apply the saying, "*Noblesse oblige.*"
19. Whom did Jesus love and praise for their sincerity?
20. Whom did he terribly rebuke for being insincere?
21. How will self-respect restrain a man from insincerity?
22. Justify the petition, "Lead us not into temptation."
23. Show how men are usually led astray by themselves rather than by others.
24. What are the safeguards against impurity?
25. What is meant by the "manliness of Christ"?
26. Give instances of manly courage.
27. What is the root of moral cowardice?
28. What three short parables illustrate the need of "counting the cost"?
29. Are difficulties a discouragement or an incentive?
30. In the Christian life, what are the battle-field, the nature of the conflict, the end sought, and the helps available?

NOTE. — A judicious selection from these Review Questions might be used for a *written* examination.

LESSON XXXI.

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.

Mark xii. 28–34, in the Revised Version. Compare Matt. xxii. 35–40.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. — MARK xii. 30.

THE MEANING.

Verse 28. "*One of the scribes*," — that is, one of the so-called "lawyers" (so in Matthew) whose business it was to expound the Mosaic law. Matthew says this man asked the question of Jesus to "tempt" him, — that is, to test his teachings, or, as we should say, to see whether his opinions in theology were *sound*. Matthew also represents the lawyer as asking Jesus which is the "*great* commandment in the law;" but that is exactly the meaning of what is here called the "first," or more precisely, the first-of-all, commandment.

Verse 29. This is translated in the Revised Version, *The Lord our God, the Lord is one.* The passage is taken from Deut. vi. 5, which the student should read (in the Revised Version), noting the marginal readings. Every Jew was bound to repeat these words in his daily devotions; "they were to be ever on his lips, as the inmost expression of his faith."

Verse 30. Perhaps the rendering "*from* all thy heart" expresses better the exact shade of the meaning. To love "*from the heart*" is to love sincerely and enthusiastically. The division of man's inner nature into heart and soul and mind (or understanding) and strength helps us to see more clearly that what we are commanded to do is to give to God the love of our whole spiritual being. All the feelings and desires of the heart, all the faculties of the mind, all the aspirations and affections of the soul, are to be consecrated to Him; and in addition to this, we are to serve Him with all the strength of a righteous will, by living true to our whole nature and by *doing* the things that we see we ought to do.

Verse 31. Not "the second is like, namely this," — but, as in the Revised Version, simply "the second is this." Matthew reports Jesus as adding here the words: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;" as if he had said, These are the great cardinal principles, like the hinges of a door, by which all the teachings in the Books of the Law and in the Books of the Prophets are moved.

Verse 32. "*Master*," — better, Teacher. The "lawyer" is talking with Jesus as one rabbi, or teacher, with another. He is well pleased with the answer which Jesus has made; for he was himself a spiritually minded man, and recognized the truth that the great requirement of the God of Israel was, "My son, give me thy heart."

Verse 34. "*Not far from the kingdom of heaven.*" It was a great deal for a Jewish lawyer to confess thus publicly that the forms and ceremonies, even including the "burnt offerings and sacrifices," on which the teachers of the law then laid such stress, were as nothing in comparison to a loving and consecrated spirit. Jesus might have said to him as he did to another lawyer (see Luke x. 28), "*This do*, and thou shalt live," — thou shalt not only be near the kingdom, but find an abundant entrance into it. To know and to acknowledge that God asks of each man his heart, is the first step toward the true life. But the next and the all-important step is to give Him our heart, and so by repentance and faith become active citizens in the divine kingdom.

THE TEACHING.

1. DOES it not seem strange that men are *commanded* to love God? We do not love our friends, our brothers and sisters, our fathers and mothers, because we have been commanded to love them. We love them because they are lovable. They have endeared themselves to us by what they are and by what they have done for us. No commandment awakened our love to them, or sustained it after it once stirred within us. Why, then, should we be commanded to love the Lord our God? Why should love to Him be presented to our minds in this exceptional way, as a task that is laid upon us by a stern master who says, "This thing *thou shalt do*"?

2. The answer to this last question is that the method of Jesus in inspiring within us a real love to God is as far as possible from that of a taskmaster who merely tells his servants what to do and then expects them to do it. Jesus indeed came "to fulfil the law and the prophets," and the unchangeable *principles* of religion and morality which were taught by Moses and the prophets are affirmed by the new Teacher. The *form* in which those principles were declared "of old" was that of the stern and solemn "Thou shalt." But the spirit of the teachings of Jesus is wholly different from that which pervades the Old Testament teachings. He would draw men to himself by the attractive power of the truths he proclaimed. He would lead them to the Father as the good shepherd leads his sheep to the refreshing streams. He calls his followers his friends, not his servants. He shows them the "King in His beauty," and trusts the native instincts of their souls to lay hold of the grace and truth which are the soul's fit nourishment. His method, so far as he can be said to have a method at all, is the method of nature. The bird sings his joyful notes because his whole being is tuned to joy. The sun shines because it is full of light and warmth, and the rose gives us of its fragrance because it cannot live without exhaling its native sweetness. So Jesus spoke of God, and revealed the beauty of the divine character, simply because he was so filled with the sense of God's presence and lived in such intimate communion with the life of God that his words and actions took on the brightness and the sweetness of his own love and trust.

3. We may even go so far as to say that if his chance talks with certain Jewish lawyers who asked him about the commandments of the old law had not been reported, and we had not been told that he said of the two commandments which he quoted, "On these hang all the law and the prophets," we should still feel that the two things which he supremely desired that all his followers should do are to love God and to love their fellow-men. Nor should we fail to see that in the Gospel narrative Jesus himself is everywhere represented as living the life of a Son and a Brother, and as teaching men *out of that life;* so that he could not talk of even the most familiar objects without showing their divine or Godward side, or go through the events of any single day of his public ministry without showing that he lived in God and from God and for God.

4. Let us make use of a very simple analogy to illustrate this method of Jesus. Here, we will suppose, is a young child who has never seen his father; for before the child was born the father was obliged to sail across the ocean to spend several years in the Old World. The mother wishes to have her boy grow up with a love in his heart for that unseen father. So she teaches him "to lisp amid his innocent prattlings the name of father, to speak of that name as if there were a charm about it, and to associate with the idea of that father all brightness, benignity, and love." She tells him that the home in which he dwells so securely and so happily is his father's home. She shows him pictures of the absent one, and tells her boy that his older brother is beginning to look exactly like their father, and that his voice at times sounds so much like the father's voice that she almost thinks it is he who is speaking. And thus the boy comes to feel that, though he cannot see his father, he yet knows something of what he is, because

he is living all the while in the delightful atmosphere of a home that is pervaded by that father's affectionate spirit.

5. In such a way as that does Jesus make us to know and realize the love and care of the Heavenly Father whom we cannot see. From that Father he came, of Him he continually spoke, in constant communion with Him he lived his life of holiness and love. When he consecrates himself to his great work and is baptized by John, the Spirit of the Lord comes upon him. When he goes into the desert to wrestle with temptation, it is God who gives him the victory, and the angels of his Father :r holy refreshment to him. When to multitude on the mountain he proclaims laws of the divine kingdom, it is still of God's helpfulness and readiness to bless the faithful soul that he speaks. Much as he says to men of their duties to one another, he puts into the very centre of his moral teachings, like a spiritual sun in the heavens, the great shining truth of the Divine Fatherhood. To open human hearts to receive that life-giving truth, he illustrates it over and over again by the simplest images drawn from outward Nature and from the common experiences of human life. Not a sparrow, he teaches, falleth to the ground without "our Father." Not the smallest bird wings its unseen flight in the "wilderness where no man is" but "our Father" feedeth it. Not a lily scents the summer air that does not draw its sweetness from Him whose loving hand robes the flowers of the field with more than kingly splendor. And this love of "our Father who is in heaven" is imaged in the pure affection which even sinful men on earth feel for their children. The prodigal is still a son of God, and the Father's open arms receive the returning lost one, while songs of joy are sung by angel choirs because of the sinner that repenteth.

Listening to this divine Teacher, our hearts burn within us as he talks of the unseen Father in heaven. Following the steps of that wonderful life from the Jordan to Calvary, we do not ask with Philip to be shown the Father, but gladly confess that, having seen the Son, we have, through him and in him, seen the Father, — his Father and our Father, his God and our God.

6. And now we are prepared to understand what it is to love God. It is simply *letting God love us*, — giving welcome, that is, to God's love and believing the love He hath to us. The emotion which a child feels "when it looks up into the mother's eye, the symbol to it of all protection; or into the father's eye, the symbol to it of all authority," is *the same in kind* as the feeling which arises when the pure heart looks up to the protecting Love and the authoritative Right which are embodied in the Heavenly Father. But this feeling must be fed by thought and action. A loving child loves to express its love; loves also to think of the father-love and the mother-love in which it so securely rests. So our love to God depends for its growth upon the regular exercise of our spiritual powers, by expressing itself in prayer and praise and an obedient life. It is nurtured by thinking about God, — by meditation upon His wondrous revealings of Himself in Nature, in history, in Christ, and in the soul; "by the truth so grandly luminous, that God the Infinite Father loves us, and loves the world that is made for us."

7. We *can* all, then, love God if we will open our hearts to receive His love, and if besides we will give to this spiritual affection its proper nurture. A great preacher well says: "There is no way by which a person who is not before our eyes may be kept near us except only by the diligent effort on our part to keep thought, love, and will in contact with him, — thought meditating, love going out toward him, will submitting." But this means effort. It means the "daily walk" with God, — the morning and evening meditation upon His goodness, the prayer in the closet, and the worship with "the household of faith" in the sanctuary of His praise. It means that loving obedience to the known Will of God which is itself an open channel through which fresh streams of love flow into the heart. Thus may we see Him who is unseen; and seeing Him thus we shall love Him with all the heart and soul and mind and strength.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

By thy love to God the love to thy neighbor is begotten; and by the love to thy neighbor thy love to God is nourished. — QUARLES.

The true measure of loving God is to love Him without measure. — ST. BERNARD.

What can I do to awaken love? *I can meditate and pray.* — Dr. DEWEY.

All things work together for good to them that love God. — ROM. viii. 28.

We love, because he first loved us. — 1 JOHN iv. 19.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Who was it that asked Jesus about the "first," or "great" commandment? Note on ver. 28.
2. Why did he ask him? Same note.
3. From what part of the Old Testament did Jesus quote the commandment? Note on ver. 29.
4. What does it mean to love "from all the heart"? Note on ver. 30.
5. What is it to love God with all the strength? Same note, last sentence.
6. When we *strongly* — or, as we sometimes say, *really* — love a parent or teacher, how do we best show this love?
7. What is meant by the words, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"? Note on ver. 31.
8. Meaning of "*Master*" in ver. 32? Note.
9. What *might* Jesus have said to the scribe? See Luke x. 38.
10. What is the *first* step toward the true life? Note on ver. 34.
11. What is the next and more important step? Same note.
12. Why do we love those who are near and dear to us? § 1.
13. Why, then, are we *commanded* to love God?
14. Which would induce us to love a person, — to be told that we *must* love him, or to be shown the beauty and attractiveness of his character?
15. Which of these two methods did Jesus use? § 2.
16. Tell in your own language what is "supposed" in § 4.
17. Give some facts from the life of Jesus that show how closely he lived with God. § 5.
18. How did he *illustrate* in his teachings God's love and care? § 5.
19. What is it, then, to *love God?* § 6.
20. How do you think one's love to God will *grow?* Read over carefully §§ 6 and 7.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Who questioned Jesus about the "great commandment"? Note on ver. 28.
2. What was his *motive* in asking the question? Same note.
3. Where in the Old Testament is ver. 29 found, and of what importance were these words to a Jew? Note.
4. Explain the meaning of each of the words *heart, soul, mind,* and *strength,* as used in ver. 30. Note.
5. What does the sentence, "On these two commandments *hang* all the law and the prophets," mean? Note on ver. 31.
6. Why was the scribe pleased with the reply of Jesus? Note on ver. 32.
7. Explain the full meaning of ver. 34. Note.
8. Why does it seem strange that we are *commanded* to love God? § 1.
9. Show that in fact Jesus does not command, but rather persuades and attracts. § 2.
10. What is meant by saying that Jesus followed the "method of Nature"? § 2.
11. Suppose the conversation reported in our lesson-passage had not come down to us, how should we have learned that Jesus supremely desired that we should love God and man? § 3.
12. Illustrate the method of Jesus by the case supposed in § 4.
13. Show from the life of Jesus his intimate communion with God. § 5.
14. Show from his teachings how he emphasized the truth of God's fatherly love and care. § 5.
15. In what sense can it be said that "having seen the Son we have seen the Father"?
16. What is it, then, to *love God?* § 6.
17. What love is the same *in kind* with our love to God? § 6.
18. How does this love to God grow? § 6.
19. Give the quotation in the second sentence of § 7.
20. Apply this to the motive of our love to God. § 7.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Commanding and attracting, as methods of religious persuasion. 2. Meaning of 1 John iv. 20. 3. Meaning of 1 John iv. 19.

LESSON XXXII.

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD."

Matt. xvii. 14–20, Revised Version; and compare, in the same version, Mark ix. 14–29, and Luke ix. 37–43.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Have faith in God.—Mark xi. 22.

THE MEANING.

SPECIAL NOTE.—In Raphael's great painting of the *Transfiguration*, the scene described in our lesson-passage is wonderfully portrayed. Let the pupils, if possible, see and examine a photograph of this picture. No commentary can be so effective, or make the scene so real to the mind.

Verse 14. "*Were come to the multitude,*" etc. Mark (ix. 14–16) says that as Jesus and the three who had been with him on the Mount of Transfiguration were coming to the other disciples, they saw a crowd and scribes disputing with them. Jesus asks them the cause of the dispute. In reply to this question the afflicted father tells his sad story. The whole narrative is given by Mark in such a detailed and vivid manner as to show that it was evidently the account of an eyewitness.

"*Kneeling to him,*"—an act of homage, not of worship.

Verse 15. "*He is an epileptic.*" Mark describes other symptoms of the boy's disease. When he was under its influence, he foamed at the mouth and ground his teeth and seemed to be pining away. No wonder that those who saw him thought that an "evil spirit" had seized him.

Verse 16. "*Thy disciples.*" The disciples, as well as their Master, had power to cure these strange diseases which afflicted men's bodies through their minds. But in this case their "faith" had been too weak; besides, Jesus had told them (see Mark ix. 29), that "this kind of evil spirit can come out by nothing save by prayer," and they had evidently not been in a prayerful mood.

Verse 17. "*O faithless and perverse generation,*"—an expression not of anger but of anguish. Jesus was no doubt tempted to be impatient, not only with the multitude who were so unspiritual and perverse, but also with his own disciples, who often showed a want of real faith and a lack of sympathy with his holy mission. But instead of yielding to such impatience, he utters the merited rebuke and then proceeds at once to do the deed of mercy.

Verse 18. "*The devil;*" better, as in the margin of the Revised Version, the "*demon,*"—that is, the evil spirit that was supposed to possess the epileptic and insane boy.

Verse 20. "*Because of your little faith.*" Faith is well-defined (see § 1 of the *Teaching*) as "*a living sense of things divine.*" The disciples at this time had lost that "living sense." They had been engaged in a foolish strife of words with the scribes. Nor were they in a prayerful spirit. Jesus, on the contrary, had just come down from the Mount of his Transfiguration. He had been filled with the Divine Spirit, and had gazed with a clear vision upon the glories of the spiritual world. No wonder that he had power over the disordered spirit of this poor child, while his disciples who had been dwelling on a lower plane of being had not "faith" enough to work the cure.

"*If ye have faith,*" etc. A grain of mustard-seed, though small, was yet capable of great and rapid increase.

"*Say unto this mountain,*" etc. This is figurative language. The mountains which are removed by faith are not material, but spiritual,—such "hills of difficulty" as prejudice, and sinful habits, and an evil heart of unbelief.

THE TEACHING.

1. In order to love God we must know Him. This kind of knowledge we get by faith, which is *a living sense of things divine.* The love of God for His children is an ocean of goodness; "my faith is the little pipe that brings the refreshing waters to my soul." Or we may change the figure, and say that if we do not put out our water-jars when it rains, we shall catch no water. In other words, we exercise faith when we receive through our spiritual faculties the "things of the Spirit;" for "the things of the Spirit of God are spiritually judged."

2. Let us try to understand how this is by an analogy. We acquire our knowledge of the outward world by repeated acts of sight, hearing, touch, and taste. Without these living processes of sensation, we could know nothing of the universe in which we live. Deprived of any one of our bodily senses, we lose a certain part of this knowledge which cannot be made up to us. A blind man thought scarlet was "like the sound of a trumpet;" but he could not have had the faintest conception of how a scarlet ribbon really looks.

But you will say, "These repeated acts of seeing and hearing and touch and taste are no *proof* that there is a real world outside of me. They only prove that I have certain impressions of such a world which my mind receives through the senses." This is true. If we keep to the strict meaning of language, then it must be admitted that "not the semblance, not the shadow, of a sound logical argument can be adduced in proof of our own existence, or of that of the outward universe." Yet we believe in both. We believe that we ourselves exist, and we believe also in the existence of the outward or sensible world. Our faith rests on the constitution of our nature. So long as we are not "out of our senses," — that is, so long as we have our senses and use them, — we cannot help believing in the reality of that to which they testify. Made as we are and placed where we are, the idea of a real world which we see and hear and touch grows up in the mind, and we cannot get rid of it if we would.

3. Now, this is precisely the way in which, by faith, we come to know "the things of the Spirit of God." There are the same three steps in the process: (1) We recognize the fact that we have what we may call inward senses, — that the soul, as well as the body, has an eye and an ear by which it sees and hears what it was made to perceive. We have a conscience; and when this is used and trained we come to know the distinction between right and wrong, and ask and answer the question, What *ought* I to do? We have also the sentiment in our nature that prompts us to look up to a Higher Power and to worship that Power. Then (2) religion, or the exercise and development of these spiritual faculties, is as *real* as the exercise and development of any of our other faculties; and hence (3), from this reality of religion in the soul, we assume the existence of "the things of the Spirit," just as from the reality of our sensations we assume the existence of the outward or sensible world.

4. When, therefore, we define faith as "the living sense of things divine," we are speaking of that which is perfectly real and perfectly natural to those who use their spiritual faculties. Men who have led sober, righteous, and godly lives, who have been loving and self-denying, and have meditated much on the goodness and wisdom which are displayed in the universe, have always abounded in faith. It was *as if they saw the unseen.* They obeyed the call of Duty; and Duty seemed to them to be the "daughter of the Voice of God." They put forth the strong exertions of a righteous will, and straightway they became conscious of the presence of the All-righteous One who was working with them, giving them strength and courage. Trials and sorrows came to them; but as they tried to bear these with a courageous spirit, a feeling of solemn joy arose within them, and they received a wonderful intimation that they were born for a higher end than animal enjoyments or even intellectual pleasures, and belong to a higher life than that of the senses or of the understanding. And by their love also came the faith that ever "works by love." Learning

by experience that only when man loves does he truly live, — that in this one word "love" lies the cure of all the ills and wrongs that human beings suffer, — they have come to believe that love is divine, that "God *is* love." *Whatever road of a true spiritual experience men have followed has somewhere joined the great highway that leads to Deity.*

5. Perhaps, however, some one will say that this which I have been describing is not faith, but seeing; that when St. Paul speaks of faith he says, "We walk by faith and not by sight," — thus contrasting faith with seeing as something that is wholly different from it. It is indeed true that faith is not seeing with the eye; but, to use a paradox, it *is* seeing the unseen, and unseen things are seen by the soul. In the passage quoted from St. Paul (2 Cor. v. 7), the Apostle says of his life-journey, "I am making this pilgrimage to a heavenly home, which indeed I do not see with my outward sight; but I believe that it exists, and by faith I can see it even now."

6. A good deal of the trouble that we experience in understanding what faith is, comes from our failing to distinguish between the insight of faith and the trust of faith. We do not see anything, whether with the eye of the body or the eye of the soul, that we do not at once and involuntarily go beyond what is seen to a belief in some law or principle that holds true where sight cannot penetrate. We see the apple fall; but we believe in the law of gravitation. We see a few scattered facts in the history of life on our planet. We believe in a law of evolution which includes all the facts of life; and we are able to work out this law simply because our minds are so made that we *must* bring facts under laws, and must trust those laws where we cannot see their workings. In like manner the soul sees the things of the Spirit, — Right and Truth and Goodness; but it sees these only in part, and where it cannot see it trusts, — that is to say, it believes (and it cannot help believing) in spiritual laws in accordance with which Right and Truth and Goodness have their perfect work.

As far down as the eye can see into the blue-green depths of the ocean those depths are clear; but where the light fails and the eye fails, there is mystery. We *believe* the ocean is clear all the way down, but our actual sight of its clearness can go but a little way. So with the eye of faith we look into the depths of the Divine Love. As far as that vision can penetrate, God is Goodness and Wisdom and Love. For the rest our souls have confidence that what they cannot yet perceive is still Goodness and Wisdom and Love.

7. Some of us, it may be, are ready now to exclaim, with the centurion of old, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!" We are troubled because we have so little faith. How can we increase that little? First, by learning of those who *have* walked by faith. Our best helper is Christ. If we can only get up by his side and see things, so to speak, with his eyes, we shall have the heavenly vision. We shall catch the temper of his believing soul. God will seem near to us as He did to him; and this earthly life, with its mingled experiences of sorrow and joy, success and failure, will appear as but the workshop where all is apprenticeship and training for that higher life "toward which the whole creation moves."

8. But the best way to get more faith is to use our own spiritual faculties, and keep the unseen things of the Spirit habitually in our thoughts. What can be sadder than to hear a man complain that he has no faith, when he has never done anything but *wish* that he had it? We get strong muscles by exercising our muscles. Our faith, too, will grow strong if we will but exercise it. "Faith," said Goethe, "is a homely *private capital.*" We may liken it to a savings-bank. Every child knows that if he puts into his "bank" every day even a small coin, he will after a while have a large amount of money to use in case of need. So is it with faith. It accumulates by our daily exercises of love, trust, prayer, repentance, obedience, and faithfulness. We have only to live every day as children of the Heavenly Father to find that we have been laying up for ourselves a fund of the treasures of faith, from which in time of need or sore distress we can draw and feel ourselves indeed "rich toward God."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

All I have seen leads me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen. — EMERSON.

Faith affirms many things respecting which the senses are silent, but nothing that they deny. — PASCAL.

Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. — MARK ix. 24.

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the test of things not seen. — HEB. xi. 1.

The faith of the heart is a stronger assurance than all the visions of the outward sense. — DR. DEWEY.

He endured, as seeing him who is invisible. — HEB. xi. 27.

We walk by faith, not by sight. — 2 COR. v. 7.

I live by the faith of the Son of God. — GAL. ii. 20.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What were the people and the scribes disputing about when Jesus came down from the Mount of the Transfiguration? Note on ver. 14.
2. What was the story which the father of the epileptic boy told to Jesus? Mark ix. 17–19 and 21, 22.
3. What is the meaning of ver. 17? Note.
4. How did people in the time of Jesus account for epilepsy and insanity? Note on ver. 18.
5. When people say at the present time that a man who is crazy with drink or insane with rage acts as if an evil spirit possessed him, what do they mean?
6. What reason did Jesus give for the failure of the disciples to cure the boy? Note on ver. 20.
7. To what did he compare faith, and why? Same note.
8. What sort of mountains can faith remove? Same note.
9. How is faith defined in § 1?
10. How do you know that there is a real world outside of your own mind? § 2. (Read carefully the last sentence in § 2.)
11. Who are the men that have had most faith in God? § 4, second sentence.
12. But how does such faith differ from seeing? § 5.
13. What *law* is shown us in the fall of an apple? § 6.
14. Why do we believe in such a law since we cannot see it? § 6.
15. Compare our looking into the ocean with our looking into God's love. § 6, last clause.
16. Who will help us to increase our faith? § 7.
17. What can we ourselves do to increase it? § 8.
18. How is faith like a savings-bank? § 8.
19. What can *you* put into this bank?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Give the *substance* of this lesson-passage. Matt. xvii. 14–20.
2. Describe the symptoms of the epileptic's disease. Mark ix. 17–19 and 21, 22.
3. What was the common belief in the time of Jesus respecting the insane and the epileptic? Note on ver. 18.
4. Why could not the disciples cure the boy? Note on ver. 20.
5. What does the last part of ver. 20 mean? Note.
6. Define and illustrate faith. § 1.
7. How do we gain our knowledge of an outward world? § 2.
8. How much is *proved* by these processes of sensation and perception? § 2.
9. Why then do we believe in a real outward world? § 2.
10. Show that we come in the same way — that is, by a similar process — to know spiritual things, and state the three steps of that process. § 3.
11. Show how men of faith have seen the unseen in their moral and religious experiences. § 4.
12. Repeat the closing sentence of § 4.
13. What then does St. Paul mean by saying, "We walk by faith *and not by sight*"? § 5.
14. Distinguish between the *insights* of faith and the *trusts* of faith. § 6.
15. *Why* do we believe in law in the natural world? § 6.
16. Show that our trust in spiritual laws rests on the same basis.
17. Illustrate the seeing and the trust of faith from the comparison given in the last clause of § 6.
18. How can Christ help our faith? § 7.
19. On what must we chiefly depend for an increase of our faith? § 8.
20. How is faith like a savings-bank? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The faith of science and the faith of the soul. 2. Meaning of John xx. 29.

LESSON XXXIII.

THE PARABLE OF THE LILY.

Matt. vi. 28–34 (Revised Version).

GOLDEN TEXT. — Be not, therefore, anxious. — Matt. vi. 31.

THE MEANING.

Verse 28. In ver. 25 Jesus had told his hearers not to be anxious about clothing any more than about food. As the life is more than the food that sustains life, so is the body more than the clothing we put on it. He who gave the life will provide means for sustaining it; He who made the body will take care that we have what will protect and suitably adorn it.

"*The lilies of the field*," — that is, wild lilies, growing without human care. We may understand by this expression wild-flowers in general, whose rich and varied colors might suggest the comparison with the purple and gold of an emperor's robes; or we may confine it to the wild lilies of Palestine, many species of which were flowers of gorgeous hue, — such, for example, as the splendid "crown imperial," or the amaryllis with "golden liliaceous blossoms," or perhaps the so-called "Hûleh" lily, described by modern travellers as a very large flower, the three inner petals of which meet above and form a splendid canopy. All these varieties of lilies grew on the hillsides of Galilee.

"*Toil not nor spin.*" In the East, flax was made into clothing by hard manual labor, — planting and harvesting, spinning and weaving.

Verse 29. "*Solomon in all his glory.*" This refers not only to the rich, gold-embroidered robe in which the king was clothed, but to the general magnificence of his court. Read the description in 2 Chron. ix. 15–28.

"*One of these.*" *One* is emphatic. A single wild lily blooming unseen on the hillside exceeds in "glory" the greatest earthly pomp.

Verse 30. "*God doth so clothe.*" Mr. Gannett, in his beautiful poem, "Consider the Lilies," shows us, as it were, the way in which the Creator clothes the lily: —

> "He hides within the lily
> A strong and tender care,
> *That wins the earth-born atoms*
> *To glory of the air;*"

that is, the beauty of the flower is unfolded by the Creator-Spirit *from within.*

"*The grass of the field.*" Flowers are part of the herbage which grows in the pastures. They too, like the grass, are cut down in Palestine and used for fuel.

"*The oven.*" This was a covered earthen pan, wider at the bottom than at the top. The dried grass was put inside to heat quickly the walls of the vessel; then the dough was placed in thin layers on the outside of the pan and instantly baked.

Verse 31. "*Be not, therefore, anxious.*" The translation here and in ver. 28 is changed from "take no thought," as the Common Version gives it, to the better rendering, "be not anxious." In the time of King James, when the old Version was made, the English phrase, "take no thought," meant precisely what we now mean when we say, "Be not over-careful, or over-anxious." In ver. 31 the tense of the Greek

verb expresses even more than is indicated in the Revised Translation. The full meaning is, Be not over-anxious *now*, — that is, Have no present anxiety about what is to come. In ver. 34 the same precept is repeated in a little different form: "Be not anxious for the morrow."

Verse 32. "*The Gentiles*," — the heathen nations of antiquity. What Jesus here means is, that to live only for the things of time is the mark of a heathen; but one who believes that God is his Father, and that He careth for him, will "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

Verse 33. This great command is explained in the Teaching, § 8. The phrase, "the kingdom of God," or "the kingdom of heaven," has different shades of meaning in different parts of the New Testament. Its general meaning is the higher spiritual life in its fulness, which we are to seek for ourselves and for others, and for the coming of which in the earth we are to labor and to pray.

Verse 34. Here we are given another good and sufficient reason for not being over-anxious, and for casting our care upon Him who careth for us. We have enough to do to meet bravely and with a trustful heart the trials and troubles of each day. If we add to-morrow's troubles and take them upon ourselves before they come, we double our burden. God helps us carry the burden of to-day, and bids us trust Him to give us strength for each day in proportion to our need and *in the hour of our need.*

THE TEACHING.

1. If the question were asked, What part of the Sermon on the Mount is the most beautiful, the general answer would undoubtedly be, The parable of the Lily. The parable of the Birds, which precedes it, is also full of beauty, and teaches the same lesson of trust. "Behold," said Jesus, "the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and *your Heavenly Father* feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they?" Perhaps at the very moment a flock of birds was flying over the multitude that listened to the Mountain Instruction of the Great Teacher. Some of the more devout among those "listening thousands" may have thought of what their own poets had said of old, — that God "provideth for the ravens their food" and "giveth to the young ravens which cry." (Psalm cxlvii. 9; Job xxxviii. 41.) But Jesus taught them more than this. These happy birds, so free from care, are fed by that Infinite Being whom you alone, His human creatures, can call your Father, and in whose sight you are of infinitely more worth than all these "birds of the heaven." You, indeed, must "sow and reap and gather into storehouses." You must provide for the future. The brute creation lives in to-day. It is man's prerogative to "gather" for the needs of coming days. Therefore must he plough and sow and reap; therefore must he work if he would eat; and therefore must he practise thrift and prudence, and wisely "put by" enough to supply his wants and the wants of those who depend upon him when the "evil days" of sickness and old age shall come to him. Only — and this is the lesson of the parable of the Birds — let him not be anxious or distrustful. He who feeds the birds watches over His children, and knows their needs. He gives food to the merry songsters, who have no instincts that lead them to sow and reap and to compel the forces of Nature to work in their behalf. You, then, have only to trust Him and do your duty, and you too will be fed.

2. Having told the people this parable of the Birds to show them why they should trust God and have no anxiety, Jesus goes on to tell them another parable that is even more beautiful, — a parable, too, that suggests several interesting lessons, though its main teaching is the lesson of trusting the Heavenly Father. It is worthy of notice that Jesus had the feeling that these unconscious flowers are in some real

sense man's fellow-creatures, sharing in part the same life which flows through his own being, and watched over by the same loving Providence that rules in the affairs of men. If a Greek or Roman poet had called attention to a flower, he would have spoken of it as if it were actually a beautiful youth. He would have called it Narcissus or Hyacinthus, *making believe* that the flower was a human being like himself. Such a way of looking at Nature was highly poetic, but it was not the way to make men feel their real relationship to trees and flowers. Jesus was the first to teach that while trees and flowers are other than ourselves, having a life of their own, they are yet our fellow-creatures, having the source of their life in God, in whom they and we "live and move and have our being." As we speak of the indwelling God, whose voice in us is our conscience, who inspires all our better purposes and our holier thoughts, so Jesus speaks of the flowers of the field as receiving their beauty from the same indwelling God, by whose ever-present agency they are clothed and are filled with their refreshing fragrance.

3. It was necessary to give man this new conception of the life of Nature in order to make him understand the lessons which Nature teaches. If the flowers are indeed our fellow-creatures, — if what we are to "consider" is not some imaginary human being, the personified spirit of the lily, but the *lily itself* in all the sweetness and beauty that belong to it, — then may we learn from it how to order our human lives.

The first lesson the lily teaches us is the folly of our pride in dress. If we are ever so "anxious for raiment," if we give precious time and thought that are needed for other things to such trivial questions as dress and ornaments, it profiteth us nothing. We cannot vie with the lily. There is more splendor of color in a flower-sprinkled meadow than in a ball-room of richly dressed and bejewelled ladies. The costliest shows of human life can never rival the cheap gifts of Nature, — the gorgeous hues of the sunset, the sparkling drops of dew, the pink and white of apple and peach blossoms, the myriad tints of flowers, and the wings of insects. We need not, indeed, affect to despise beautiful apparel; but what burdens of foolish and useless anxiety many of God's human creatures are weighted by because they will be so over-careful about matters of dress and adornment!

4. Then, again, the lily teaches us that there is no beauty like that which is unfolded from within. No beauty of form or feature is so winning as the loveliness of a loving heart looking out from soul-lit eyes and smiling lips. A charming story is told of a poor London crossing-sweeper, whose first hint of God and heavenly love came to him from the cheery glance and pitying blue eyes of a whole-souled young man who always gave him a pleasant look as he passed him in his daily walks. No beauty of outward dress, or even of well-cut features and a handsome figure, could have touched the poor waif's heart so deeply. It was a ray of that divine beauty which shines upon us in every lily of the field, and which, in another form, made the Son of Man, through the beauty of his holy life, the "light of the world." The Apostle Peter speaks of the "apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." If we would heed the lesson that the lily teaches, we must learn to value most the adornments which are most worth possessing,— the graces and virtues of a Christian character unfolded from the spirit of Christ within the soul.

5. But these two lessons of the parable of the Lily are only parts of the larger lesson of trust and obedience that it also teaches us. In his song of the violet Lowell sings: —

> "All the wonders of faithful Nature
> Are worked for the love of me.
> Winds wander, and dews drip earthward,
> Rains fall, suns rise and set,
> Earth whirls, and all *but to prosper*
> *A poor little violet.*"

Is it presumptuous for a tiny violet, blooming unseen amid the meadow grasses, — the veriest speck on an insignificant spot of this small planet, — thus to think of itself as being regarded by the Infinite Creator of suns and stars, "who inhabiteth eternity"? No! Science, rightly interpreted, shows us — what Jesus so long ago affirmed — a divine presence in

every smallest atom of matter, "acting everywhere as a perpetually renewing and creative energy." More than this: Science has taught us that in the making of a flower Nature is not only a mathematician, following fixed laws of multiplying and dividing in endlessly varying the form of leaf and blossom, but an artist, too, painting better than any Raphael or Turner, and carving more nicely than any sculptor or decorator. And the latest teachings of our Science reveal the many cunning devices by which honey-loving insect-rovers are made to carry unawares from flower to flower the fertilizing pollen, which must thus be borne to the right place before the seeds can be made from which new flowers will grow. All the beauty and all the sweetness of the lilies are but so many "paths to use;" and it is for the Spirit of Love that all these paths are made! God's care for the lily is as tender and as watchful as if each smallest flower were a planet moving in an infinite orbit.

6. This, then, is the great lesson: *Trust in God, and throw away anxiety.* We are to put our trust, not in "natural laws" or "the order of the universe," but in the living God, of whose method "natural laws" are the finite expression, as the "order of the universe" is but another phrase for His Eternal Providence. Such trust is as simple a thing as the feeling which the little child has who clings to its father's loving hand and trusts its mother's loving heart. With these natural trusts,— of the child in the parent, of the soul in God,— we reverse the rule which it is wise to follow in other relations. If we want to know whether we can trust a fellow-man, we first try him. But with God we do the opposite. We trust Him first, and then in all the experiences of life we try Him, to find our early trust well placed. The Psalmist said he had been young but now was old, and yet he had not seen the righteous forsaken. That was what *life* had taught him; but when he was young and before he had tested the care of God, he had obeyed the instinct of trust which was implanted within him. He had done as the lily does when it turns to the sun and trusts in its light and its warmth. And with the trust of the lily the devout man unites the lily's obedience. If the lily could shut out from itself the sunshine and the dews, and refuse to be nourished by the food the soil contains, its trust would be vain. There is no encouragement to the idle or the thriftless in the parable of the Lily. The lily toils not, neither does it spin, to get its beautiful garment; but it does all it can to obey the laws of its life and appropriate the gifts of "faithful Nature." *Our* trust must go hand in hand with obedience. God helps us when we help ourselves. He could not be the righteous God and be the Providence of idle men.

7. The *folly* of being anxious should keep us from anxiety if the beauty of a calm trust in God fails to attract us. Those who persist in "borrowing trouble" run quickly into debts they can never pay. Anxiety is all in vain. You watch for the cloud that you fear is coming from some particular corner of the heavens; and though it may not rise there, it will rise *somewhere* in spite of all your watching! You go all over the house and fasten every window and lock every door; but you will have left some unprotected place, and the inevitable burglar will get in! So the mother of Achilles plunged the future hero into the fabled waters to make his body invulnerable; but there was the little spot on the heel, by which she held him, and the fatal arrow struck him *there!* "We can do a great deal by work, but we can do nothing by worry."

8. But the best cure for anxiety concerning temporal things is to lay up for ourselves "treasures in heaven,"— treasures of goodness and usefulness. Dr. Martineau explains the precept, "Seek first the kingdom of God," as meaning that the chief conscious aim of a man should be not to get the things which are needful for his earthly life, but to get these things *worthily*, and to give to the higher part of his nature an opportunity to grow into the divine image. In his physical life man should do as the birds and the lilies do,— take God's temporal gifts, gathering what He bestows, and gathering it in the way in which He has made man to gather it. He can then rise above all anxiety, and live the noble, self-forgetting, Christlike life of faith and hope and love.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

A fearless confidence in God is so reasonable that it becomes a duty. — JEREMY TAYLOR.

Belief and love — a believing love will relieve us of a vast load of care.— EMERSON.

Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. — PSALM xxxvii. 7.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. — ISA. xxvi. 3.

Trust in him with all thine heart; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths. — PROV. iii. 6.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.— JOHN xiv. 27.

Casting all your anxiety upon God, because he careth for you. — 1 PETER v. 7.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Tell something about the lilies of Palestine. Note to ver. 28.
2. How was clothing made in the East? Same note.
3. What was the "*glory* of Solomon"? Note to ver. 29.
4. Repeat the verse given in note to ver. 30.
5. What does it mean?
6. What is meant in ver. 30 by "the grass of the field"? Note.
7. Explain the "oven" that is mentioned in this verse. Note.
8. What does ver. 31 mean? Note.
9. What is meant by the reference to the "Gentiles" in ver. 32? Note.
10. Explain ver. 34. Note.
11. Tell something about the "parable of the Birds" and what it teaches us. § 1.
12. What was the feeling of Jesus about flowers? § 2, second sentence.
13. How would a Greek or Roman poet have spoken of a lily? § 2.
14. But what did Jesus teach about trees and flowers? § 2.
15. What is the "first lesson" taught us by the lily? § 3, second clause.
16. What does the lily teach us is the highest form of beauty? § 4.
17. What is told of the London crossing-sweeper? § 4.
18. Repeat the verse in § 5.
19. Read over § 5 carefully, and then tell in your own language *how* God cares for the lily.
20. What is the "great lesson"? § 6, first sentence.
21. What must we do besides trusting in God? § 6, last part.
22. Illustrate from the examples given in § 7 the *folly* of being anxious.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What is the general truth taught in Matt. vi. 25? Note on ver. 28.
2. What *were* "the lilies of the field"? Same note.
3. What was Solomon's "glory"? Note to ver. 29.
4. Explain the verse quoted in ver. 30. Note.
5. Explain "the grass of the field" and the "oven." Same note.
6. Explain the full meaning of the *Golden Text*. Note to ver. 31.
7. What does Jesus tell us in ver. 32 is *heathenish?* Note.
8. What is the *general meaning* of the phrase, the "kingdom of God"? Note to ver. 33.
9. What reason for not being anxious is given in ver. 34? Note.
10. Give and explain the "parable of the Birds." § 1.
11. In what important respects are men wholly unlike the birds? § 1.
12. Show how Jesus taught man's *kinship* with flowers. § 2.
13. What is the "first lesson" the lily teaches? § 3.
14. What does the lily teach us about the highest kind of beauty? § 4.
15. Tell the story of the London crossing-sweeper, and give the quotation from the Apostle Peter. § 4.
16. What does Science reveal to us that illustrates the way in which God cares for flowers? § 5.
17. What is the "great lesson"? § 6.
18. Whom do we trust before we try, and whom do we try before we trust? § 6.
19. What should go with our trust in God? § 9.
20. Illustrate the folly of being anxious. § 7.
21. Explain ver. 33. § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Forethought and anxiety compared. 2. Do the teachings of Science strengthen or weaken our trust in Providence?

LESSON XXXIV.

REVERENCE.

Matt xxi. 12, 13, and 33–41 in Revised Version. Read also the accounts in Mark xi. 15–17 and xii. 1–9; and Luke xix. 45, 46, and xx. 9–17; and with Matt. xxi. 12, 13, compare John ii. 13–16.

GOLDEN TEXT. — They will reverence my son. — Matt. xxi. 37.

THE MEANING.

Verse 12. "*The temple of God.*" The Bible Dictionaries and the Commentaries give lengthy descriptions of this magnificent temple and its services. It is doubtful, however, if any of the so-called "restorations" of the great edifice are correct. Dr. Edersheim's work on "The Temple and its Services" — a book which should be in every Sunday-school library — may be consulted with profit.

Brown's "Life of Jesus for Young People" gives a lively word-picture of the cleansing of the temple: —

"Jesus led his disciples directly toward the temple. When he arrived before the lofty front, its spotless marble pillars and ornaments of gold were glittering in the afternoon sun. Here he dismounted, and led the way up a broad flight of steps into the first enclosure, commonly called the Court of the Gentiles. This was open to the people of all nations.

"In the middle of this court Jesus paused. It was by itself a large and magnificent building. Its floor was a broad, smooth pavement of various colored stones, and it was surrounded by double rows of marble columns, which upheld a cedar roof. Well suited was this beautiful place for the worship of God. But as Jesus stood there no sounds of devotion reached his ear. He heard instead the bleating of animals, the clinking of money, and the noise of a busy traffic; for all the cloisters, or spaces between the columns, were filled at this time with merchants and money-changers, who grew rich by exchanging Jewish for foreign coins, and selling the doves and sheep which were to be offered in sacrifice at the approaching feast. This business should have been carried on outside the temple. But the priests, who cared little for the purity of their religion, had suffered it to enter the walls of the sacred edifice, and to usurp the only place in which people not Jews could go to offer their prayers." — (pp. 140, 141.)

Verse 33. "*A vineyard.*" God had intrusted His kingdom to "husbandmen," the leaders and rulers of the Jews. Of these leaders of the people — as representing the nation — God had required the "fruits" of repentance and righteousness, and had sent to them His "servants," the prophets whom they had stoned and slain. At last He sends to Israel His "beloved son," the Christ whom, instead of "reverencing," they are about to put to death on the cruel cross.

"*Set a hedge about it,*" — a hedge of prickly pears or a stone wall to protect the vineyard. So the Jews were "set off" from other nations and guarded from heathen influences.

"*Digged a wine-press.*" This was a hollow dug out of the rock in which the grapes were trodden with the feet. It has no symbolical meaning, but completes the description.

"*Built a tower,*" — for the watchmen who guarded the vineyard.

"*Let it out.*" Land was let in Palestine to tenants, who agreed to give the landlord a certain amount of produce every year.

Verse 37. "*His son.*" Mark says: "Having one son, his well beloved, he sent him."

THE TEACHING.

1. OUR two lesson-passages illustrate the value of reverence. Jesus drove the traders and money-changers from the temple because he would have men reverence the sacred place where God was worshipped. He told the priests and rulers of the Jews the parable of the Vinedressers, that they might see the folly and the wickedness of those who have no reverence for holy men. Both by what he did and by what he said in these instances, he taught the two great lessons, — first, that the nucleus of religion, its central principle, is reverence for the all-righteous and all-holy One; and, secondly, that reverence requires us not only to adore God, but also to venerate all goodness and holiness that we see in human beings, and to treat with tenderness and respect the things that are associated with religion.

2. Reverence may be defined as admiration mingled with awe. The awe is there because when we are in the presence of holy men, or when we really feel that the place we are in is a holy place, we dread to do anything that would be unworthy of the company or unsuitable to the place. We fear to do wrong when we are conscious of God's presence.

The tendency to reverence is natural to man. "There is," says Dr. Clarke, "a tendency in the human soul to *look up* with reverence to things higher, nobler, and better than we are ourselves. The nature of man, full of antagonisms, has, with its self-esteem, its self-reliance, its self-will, also an opposite disposition, — one which leads one to esteem others more than one's self; to pay homage to a superior virtue and a profounder knowledge." Such hero-worship is always ennobling when the heroes are righteous and saintly souls, not those who are merely "smart" or "mighty."

3. The cultivation of reverence should begin in childhood and in the home. "It is hardly possible for a child to feel reverence at all unless he feels it for his father and mother." All persons, even children themselves, look upon this virtue as one of the loveliest traits of a child's character. On the other hand, nothing is more disagreeable than a young person who shows no respect for the superior wisdom and goodness of his elders, — who speaks and acts as if he felt himself —

> "Never at ease except he struts the best
> And crows the loudest of the company."

It comes, I fear, from want of reverence in our homes, that the young people of our time are so often ill-behaved in the presence of their elders, at school and Sunday-school, in the car, on the street, and in general society. Yet every thoughtful person knows that there is no surer test of real manliness and womanliness, on the part of boys and girls, than respectful and modest behavior. Good manners, when they are the expression of a noble and unselfish heart, are always and everywhere the passports to esteem and love.

4. How may we educate reverence? Begin by keeping self-esteem within bounds. Pay deference to the opinions of others, who may be supposed, on some subjects at least, to know more than you do. Show Christian courtesy to all whom you meet, especially to all women and all aged persons.

"*Look up and not down.*" Dr. Clarke counsels the young to study the lives of the generous and disinterested, the pure in heart, those who have suffered for righteousness' sake.

Dr. Martineau uses a beautiful figure of speech when he reminds us that *the upper springs of our affections soon run dry unless we ask the clouds to nourish them.* By asking the clouds he means that we are to look up to the "great cloud of witnesses," — the noble, the brave, and the true, the prophets and heroes of all ages, who are God's messengers in the moral world, just as the clouds are his messengers in the material world. Thanks to good books, we can always be in the company of true heroes and real saints. When we read the stories of golden deeds, we instinctively venerate the doers of those deeds. Or if we turn to the great poets and teachers of our race, if their "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" touch our hearts, they kindle within us the soul's nobler fires of rev-

erence and enthusiasm, the purifying flames that cleanse us of all baseness and selfishness.

5. But the education of reverence is not wholly by books. We are made reverent by associating with those to whom we can look up with enthusiastic admiration. Young people naturally choose their intimates from among those of their own age; and this is well. It is also well not to confine our companions to our equals or inferiors, but to have some friends whose superior knowledge and goodness allure us to "come up higher." Sometimes a teacher is such a friend. Read "Tom Brown at Rugby" and see how that manly young fellow came to love and reverence Dr. Arnold, "and would, by God's help, follow his steps in life and death." Dr. Edward Everett Hale, in an article entitled "How I was educated," says: "Of all with whom I have ever had to do, I owe the most to my father, my mother, and *my older brother*." That older brother was not only a great scholar, a person of very wide accomplishments, but also a man of a most kindly and affectionate nature; and in Dr. Hale's youth the two brothers were "forever together." Blessed beyond anything that they can know or imagine, are the young who have guides and counsellors that make truth adorable and goodness lovable, and change stern Duty into the queen of all true hearts, "wearing the Godhead's most benignant grace!"

6. Our Golden Text says, "*They will reverence my son.*" And who is more worthy of reverence than the "well-beloved" Son of God? Who so surely as he will lead us to revere and to love the Heavenly Father? To be his true disciple, his devoted follower, is not only to learn what reverence means; it is the certain way to become reverent ourselves. For no one really follows a leader who does not look up to him as a better spirit than himself. The more we strive to attain to Christ's type of character and to look upon life and the world, upon man and God and duty, as he looked upon them, the more we shall venerate the divine wherever we find it.

7. And this reverence will manifest itself in ways that will become the means of a further growth in reverence. We shall form the *habit* of looking up to God, of meditating upon His goodness, His wisdom, and His loving Providence. Such meditation will give divine truth a lodgment in the soul; and through our hopes and fears, our desires and consciences, it will connect itself with all the conduct of life. In this way truth will ever put on new glory, and the added brightness will awaken fresh veneration in our minds and hearts.

8. Our reverence toward God will also inspire that other reverence, which Goethe declared to be the true Christian reverence,—namely, respect and honor for those who are beneath us. Care for the weak, respect for the rights of the poor and unfortunate, active compassion for the ignorant and degraded among our fellow-men, cannot long exist where there is no feeling of reverence for the divine in man. The ideal man is he who in his earthly life is like a loving child in a true home where "the deferential look, the hand of generous help, the air of cheerful trust, show how, with beings above and others beneath him, he can forget himself in gentle thoughts and quiet reverence." Be it ours to carry in the breast such "*gentle thoughts;*" and in this world, with God and all saints above us and so many of God's needy and wandering ones beneath us, be it our blessed privilege to walk humbly and with "*quiet reverence.*"

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

Reverence that which is best in the Universe. — MARCUS AURELIUS.

Devoutly look, and nought but wonders shall pass by thee. — RUCKERT.

Reverence is an *ennobling* sentiment. — WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills whence cometh my help. — PSALM cxxi. 1.

The soul cannot permanently feed from its own fuel its nobler fires; it needs the *stream of some pure air from aloft* to kindle the smouldering thoughts. — MARTINEAU.

Whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things. — PHIL. iv. 8.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Where and what was the "temple of God" mentioned in ver. 12?
2. Describe the "cleansing of the temple." Note on ver. 12, extract from Brown's "Life of Jesus."
3. Tell the parable of the Vine-dressers. Matt. xxi. 33–41.
4. Who were the "husbandmen"? Note on ver. 33.
5. What "fruits" had God required of them? Same note.
6. Who were the "servants"? Same note.
7. Why was a "hedge" set about the vineyard? Same note.
8. What did this mean in the parable? Same note.
9. What was a "wine-press"? Same note.
10. What was the "tower" for? Same note.
11. How was land let in Palestine? Same note.
12. Who was the "beloved son" whom God sent to the Jews?
13. What did they do to him?
14. *Why* did Jesus drive the traders from the temple? § 1.
15. Why did he tell the parable of the Vine-dressers? § 1.
16. What does reverence require of us? § 1, last sentence.
17. Define reverence. § 2.
18. Where should the cultivation of reverence begin? § 3.
19. Which shows a manly and noble character,—irreverence or respectful behavior? § 3.
20. What does the Harry Wadsworth motto, "Look up and not down," mean? § 4, second clause.
21. Show what help comes to the young by their having the companionship of those who are older and wiser than themselves. § 5, especially the *instances* there referred to.
22. If we look up to Christ, how will that make us reverent? § 6.
22. If we reverence God, how shall we be likely to treat our fellow-men? § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What do you know about the temple at Jerusalem?
2. Describe Jesus' "cleansing of the temple." Note on ver. 12.
3. Explain in ver. 33 the "vineyard," the "husbandmen," the "fruits," the "servants," and the "son." Note.
4. What was the "hedge," the "wine-press," and the "tower"? Same note.
5. How was land let in Palestine? Same note.
6. Why did Jesus drive the traders from the temple? § 1.
7. What lesson would he teach by the parable of the Vine-dressers? § 1.
8. What *two* great lessons are thus taught us? § 1.
9. Define reverence, and show that it is *natural* to man. § 2.
10. Show how reverence manifests itself in the home. § 3.
11. Point out some of the practical consequences of the spirit of irreverence. § 3, last clause.
12. Give the first rule for the education of reverence. § 4.
13. Quote Dr. Martineau's "figure of speech" in § 4.
14. What does this mean? § 4.
15. How may reverence be educated by companionship? § 5.
16. Give the instances referred to in § 5.
17. How does Christ help us to be reverent? § 6.
18. How may we educate reverence toward God? § 7.
19. How will our reverence for God affect our feelings and actions toward our fellow-men? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. "Looking up and lifting up." 2. "Hero-worship." 3. Is irreverence prevalent at the present time?

LESSON XXXV.

THANKFULNESS.

Matt. xi. 25, 26 in Revised Version (compare Luke x. 21) and Luke xvii. 11–19 in Revised Version.

GOLDEN TEXT.—I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.— Matt. xi. 25.

THE MEANING.

Verse 25. "*Answered and said.*" Jesus was not here replying to any question that had been asked him; but in some way, either from within his own mind or from without, the thought had been presented to him that all who heard him did not receive the truth which he taught. In response to this suggestion he utters the thankful acknowledgment that follows.

"*Lord of heaven and earth.*" This is a very appropriate term at the beginning of the prayer, since Jesus was about to refer to special instances in illustration of God's sovereign rule.

"*That thou didst hide.*" We must carefully note the peculiar construction of this sentence. The cause of the thankfulness of Jesus is not the rejection of the truth by the "wise and understanding," but its acceptance by those whom he calls "babes." What he says may thus be paraphrased: "I thank thee, O Father, who guidest all things in heaven and on earth, that though thy truth is hidden from those whose wisdom is only the blinding prudence of this world, it finds glad acceptance with simple and childlike hearts. It is indeed sad to see any turn away from that which alone can satisfy the soul, sad for thy prophets to be 'rejected of men;' but all things are ordered by thee, and whatever may come to me I will thankfully receive it because it comes from thee."

Luke xvii. 11. "*Through the midst of Samaria and Galilee;*" better, *along the borders of* Samaria and Galilee, — that is, in this part of his journey to Jerusalem, Jesus kept on the boundary between the two countries, having before him Samaria on the south and Galilee on the north.

Verse 12. "*Lepers.*" Leprosy was the most terrible disease known among the ancients, Those who were afflicted by it were compelled by law to live by themselves outside the walls of cities and villages. The Jewish laws concerning lepers were very severe. See Lev. xiii. 45.

"*Stood afar off.*" The legal limit of distance was one hundred paces.

Verse 14. "*Go and show yourselves to the priests.*" This command meant two things: the lepers were to go away healed, and they were also to go to their priests, — the nine Jews to the Jewish priests at Jerusalem and the Samaritan to a Samaritan priest, — in order to get the legal certificate of their being cured.

Verse 16. "*Giving him thanks.*" This man first praised God, who is the *Source* of every blessing, and then thanked Jesus, *through whom* the precious blessing of health had been bestowed upon him.

Verse 17. "*Where are the nine?*" These nine were Jews, the countrymen of Jesus;

yet they had not the grace to thank their deliverer for his merciful kindness. The despised Samaritan, the non-Jew, — one of that people on which James and John, a little while before, had wished to call down fire from heaven, — was the only one who showed any gratitude to his benefactor.

Verse 19. "*Thy faith hath made thee whole.*" In one sense the faith of the nine had made them whole. They, too, had been cured of their leprosy. But this Samaritan had a far higher faith, — even that "faith which *works by love.*" Prompted by that love, he fell down at the Master's feet in lowly thanksgiving. Not only had his body been cured, his soul had received a new and purer life; and his thanksgiving was the natural expression of that *living faith.*

THE TEACHING.

1. It seems strange that we find in the Gospels so few expressions of gratitude and praise. "It is a good thing to give thanks," not only to God for His tender mercies and loving kindnesses, but also to our human benefactors for the benefits we continually receive at their hands. Yet here are the records of a Gospel which means "good tidings;" here is the story of a life that brought joy and deliverance to all mankind, the biography of one who lived in constant communion with the Father of spirits; but we look through these records in vain for those expressions of thankfulness which such a Gospel should call forth from the men who received it in all its freshness, to whom it was like a flower with the morning dew still glistening in its fragrant cup! How rarely do the sick whom Jesus healed remember to thank him for the precious boon of health! How seldom do those whose inward eyes were opened to see such visions as kings and prophets longed to see, but died without the sight, give thanks to him who removed their spiritual blindness! And how singular it is that Jesus himself, so far as his own spiritual life is reported by the Evangelists, rarely uses the language of praise and thanksgiving! The Lord's Prayer, the model prayer of the ages, is made up exclusively of petitions. "There is not a want or an aspiration which man as a child of the Father in heaven can feel which is not mentioned rudimentally and essentially in this prayer." But there is no thanksgiving in it, no voicing of that grateful praise which springs spontaneously from the pious heart. Once only do the first three Evangelists report a prayer of Jesus in which he "rejoices and gives thanks" (I do not forget the "grace" said before the feeding of the multitude and at the Last Supper). In that prayer he thanks God for a spiritual blessing. In a brief paraphrase of his words he said, "I acknowledge, O Father, with praise and thanksgiving, that though the wise and understanding are blind to thy truth, there are some childlike hearts that are open to receive it. Yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight."

2. The absence from the Gospels of those expressions of a grateful heart which the gracious words and merciful deeds of Jesus so well deserved, need not occasion much surprise. It has been only too common for men in every age and nation to receive benefits without either appreciating them or giving thanks for them. Those among whom Jesus labored were no exception to the general rule. Thankfulness is, as the old English poet said, "the tune of angels;" and on earth this angelic tune is too seldom heard.

But the apparent absence of thankful joy from the teachings and life of Jesus himself calls for some explanation. I say the *apparent* absence; for the joy and the thankfulness are really there. No reader of the Gospels ever doubted that Jesus had a perfect *trust* in the Heavenly Father. "With such tranquillity of trust," says Theodore Parker in one of his noble sermons, "there comes a still, a peculiar and *silent* joy in God. There is no ecstasy, no fancied 'being swallowed up in God;' but there is a lasting inward sweetness and abiding joy. It will not come out in raptures, but it will fill the whole man with beati-

tudes, with delight in the Infinite God. There will be a calm and habitual peace, a light around the mortal brow which passes from glory to glory till it changes into perfect fulness of joy." These words were not written of Jesus, but they express exactly the way in which his absolute trust in God filled his being with "a peculiar and *silent* joy." If he did not, like the Psalmists, teach us to utter praises to God for the wisdom and goodness of which Nature is the perpetual revelation, yet who has ever made man see, as Jesus did, the divine in Nature? Everywhere he beholds "tokens of a diviner presence, a deeper life, holier and more beneficent purposes and influences, than those who live on a lower plane can fully comprehend." Whenever to-day we praise God for his wonderful works in the natural world, our thanksgiving is tuned to the keynote which Jesus set when he revealed the providence in the fall of a sparrow, and bade the anxious and distrustful children of men "consider the lilies." We may use the speech of the Hebrew psalms, or express our thankfulness in our own language; but the *spirit* of our praise is the spirit of him who spoke the parables of the kingdom, and made the humblest things of the natural world the eloquent teachers of the highest religious truths.

3. And is it not from this Great Teacher that we have learned to thank God "for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory"? From the opening words of the Sermon on the Mount to his last affecting words upon the cross, Jesus takes us through what is to us an ideal realm. "He fills it out with images of fidelity, justice, love, and mercy, human and divine, which reach down into the inmost depths of our being, and, with our advancing powers of thought and our perpetually renewed spiritual perceptions, create around us an ever-enlarging sphere, in which all our best faculties may find their fitting exercise and enjoyment." What then if Jesus has given us no formulas of praise, and taught us no verbal ascriptions of gratitude to God; he has done something vastly better. He has inspired the deepest sentiments of gratitude that the soul of man can cherish. He has given us the most convincing reasons for thankfulness. He has done in this respect as he has done with so large a part of our moral conduct, proclaiming principles rather than giving precise rules of action. He has taught us the *attitude* of thanksgiving, leaving us to express in appropriate ways the feelings which that attitude awakens. He has, in other words, made us thankful that we are God's children. "This is the central fact around which all things range themselves in clusters of blessings." And who that understands the height and the depth of the revelation which Jesus has made of the love of God and the worth of man does not say, "Thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ"?

4. Thankfulness to God is a feeling that is the same in kind with our thankfulness to our fellow-men. It differs only in degree. How gladly Jesus welcomed all sincere expressions of gratitude to benefactors, is well illustrated in our second lesson-passage, where we see the Samaritan leper whom Jesus had cured falling on his face at the feet of the Healer, and giving him thanks. "Where," asked Jesus, "are the nine others who were cured, and who were all of the house of Israel? Is it a fact that only this alien, this man of another nation and a different religious faith, has returned to give glory to God for the unspeakable blessing of restored health?" But the most beautiful instance of gratitude which the Gospels record is that which we find in Matt. xxvi. 6–13, and which has been fully treated in Lesson XVII of this course. "Where," asks Dr. Morison, "among all the great works of genius, do we find a simple act like this so embalmed and glorified as to create a new world of beauty, and throw its light and charm around every similar act." In the spirit which prompted the pouring of the precious ointment upon his feet, Jesus saw the unselfish, reverential love which delighted so to express itself; and through his words that act, filling then the house with its fragrance, has gone with a still more grateful perfume wherever his Gospel has been preached throughout the world, "a memorial of her, and a symbol

of what is most beautiful in the holiest affections, *touched and uplifted by a thankful reverence.*"

5. Perhaps we should all be more grateful to God, and oftener praise Him for His goodness, if we were more in the habit of expressing our gratitude to our human benefactors, — to our parents, friends, and teachers, — who do so much to make us happy and to help us in the way of right living. The great reason why we should say "Thank you" for every gift that these human friends bestow upon us, is not that we are their debtors, and can discharge the debt by a due amount of gratitude; it is rather that, by showing thankfulness for the benefits we receive, we grow in love, and are bound in a more intimate "fellowship of hearts." In these matters of affection and friendship it is not true that "still waters run deep." The deepest affection has always a sparkling surface of expression. Love is purest when it is like *running water* that laughs and sings as it flows on its life-giving way. Let the child cease to say "Thank you" in the home for the common gifts which he daily receives, and soon he will come to take those gifts as his by right, rather than the voluntary gifts of parental love. By omitting to express his thanks he deprives himself of one of the simplest and most natural means of deepening his affection. We all love to be thanked for a loving gift. Not to get the thanks, but only to do the loving deed, are we moved to confer benefits upon others. But when the receiver of the benefit expresses his gratitude to us, we are both drawn into a closer bond of friendship and affection.

6. Thus is it with our gratitude to God. The simple and sincere expression of our thankfulness to him for all his benefits is one of the surest ways of growing in grace and increasing our love. The best expression of our gratitude will of course be that which is uttered in our lives; but words of praise, if they come from the heart, are like wings on which we may rise nearer to God. We should *give thanks* to God as we thank our fellow-men, that we may not seem wanting in a "thankful reverence," and that our songs of praise and prayers of thanksgiving may make us more conscious of his presence, more sensitive to the spirit-touch of his love, more truly his affectionate as well as his obedient children.

7. Nor let us forget that, while Jesus has taught us in the Model Prayer how to pray, — how in simplest phrase to express our common needs, — he has taught us no less to live the thankful life. We learn from him to thank the Father in heaven that the childlike heart can always receive his higher truths and his diviner blessings, and to give — even as he, the well-beloved Son, did ever give — all the glory unto God for life's opportunities, for the work we can do and the words we can speak, and for the example we can leave behind us, that shall draw many souls unto righteousness.

"And so my onward way I fare
With happy heart and calm,
And mingle with my daily care
The music of my psalm."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

O Lord, that lends me life, lend me a heart replete with thankfulness. — SHAKSPEARE.

Thankfulness is the tune of angels. — SPENSER.

A single grateful thought to Heaven is the most perfect prayer. — LESSING.

From David learn to give thanks for everything. Every furrow in the Book of Psalms is sown with seeds of thanksgiving. — JEREMY TAYLOR.

I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast kept
The best in store.
We have enough, yet not too much
To long for more:
A yearning for a deeper peace
Not known before.

ADELAIDE A. PROCTER.

Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever. — PSALM cvii. 1.

[illegible] the Lord, — giving thanks always for all things. — EPH. v. 20.

[illegible] everything by prayer and supplication [illegible] thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. — PHIL. iv. 6.

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. — 2 COR. ix. 15.

[illegible] YOUNGER PUPILS.

[illegible] ought us to be thankful? Col. 2, p. 156, last three sentences of § 3.

12. Give the two instances that show how [illegible] Jesus was when those whom he helped and loved were grateful to him. § 4.

13. Why should we always say "Thank you" when we receive gifts from our human friends? § 5.

14. What happens when children get into the way of not thanking others for what they receive? § 5.

15. What will be the effect of our habitually "rendering thanks" to God for his benefits to us? § 6.

16. Give, in your own words, the *sum* of what Jesus teaches us about being thankful. § 7.

17. Repeat the verse in § 7.

18. Repeat one of the two verses given in the *Golden Sayings*.

19. Give one *Golden Saying* from the Psalms and one from the New Testament.

[illegible] OLDER PUPILS.

12. How has Jesus helped us to be thankful to God for His gifts to us in the natural world? § 2.

13. For what *other* benefits has he made us feel grateful? § 3.

14. What reasons for thankfulness has he given us? § 3.

15. How does gratitude to God resemble gratitude to a human benefactor? § 4.

16. Give the instances mentioned in § 4. of the glad welcome with which Jesus received the thanks of those whom he had benefited.

17. *Why* should we *express* our thanks to the human friends who give us gifts? § 5.

18. What comes of not doing this? § 5.

19. Apply this to giving thanks to God. § 6.

20. What is the *sum* of the teachings of Jesus concerning thankfulness? § 7.

21. Give one or more of the *Golden Sayings*.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Is ingratitude common? 2. Praise as an element of worship.

LESSON XXXVI.

ASPIRATION.

Matt. xiii. 44–46, Revised Version.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.—MATT. v. 48.

THE MEANING.

Verse 44. "*The kingdom of heaven.*" The t cannot be too often reminded that this phrase or its equivalent, "the kingdom of God," has different meanings in different passages in the Gospels. It is used to denote the Messiah's kingdom which is to take the place of the Jewish dispensation and fulfil the highest hopes of those who "of old" had dreamed of a *better time.* Again it refers to the same kingdom *perfectly realized in a higher world.* At another time it means the divine rule on earth gradually permeating and transforming human society. And still again it signifies an inward principle of spiritual life in the soul. But everywhere in the New Testament (where it occurs one hundred and nineteen times) it includes the great central idea of the *rule of God as the highest good for man.*

"*Hidden in the field.*" In old times and in the East men generally kept their money and other valuables in some hiding-place. They were sure to conceal their treasures in time of war and tumult. Such an unsettled time, when men regarded their possessions as insecure, was the period in which Jesus lived and taught; so that this story of the hid treasure came straight home to the imagination of those who heard him.

"*Buyeth that field.*" We should call it dishonest for a man to act like this; and if Jesus had said anything of this man's conduct, he would have rebuked it. But his object in telling the story was simply to show what a man would do who had accidentally found "a *treasure* hidden in the field;" he would part with all his other possessions in order to become its owner. The unexpected riches would fill him with such joy that he would at once take the necessary steps to make himself the lawful possessor of what he had found. The lesson of the parable is plain. "The kingdom of God"—the truth, holiness, and love that make a man *like* God, save him from evil, and fill him with a sacred joy—is a treasure worth more than all else we can possess.

Verse 45. "*A merchant,*"—that is, a *travelling* jeweller; a man who deals in precious stones and pearls, and is always on the lookout for goodly—that is, very beautiful—pearls. If he hears of a rare gem anywhere, he at once sets out on a journey to secure it. Such a man not only prizes precious pearls for their *money* value, but he also has a peculiar love for them, because he has cultivated his taste for such rare and lovely objects.

The ancients believed that the pearl was formed by the dew of heaven entering the shell in which it was found. Modern science tells us that pearls, which are found in oysters and other shell-fish, are the result of the intrusion of a foreign substance within the shell. To protect itself from irritation, the shell-fish covers the intruding particle with pearly matter.

Verse 46. "*The pearl of great price.*" Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, had two of the goodliest and largest pearls known in ancient times, each of which was then valued at about four hundred thousand dollars in our money.

THE TEACHING.

1. WHEN, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us to be perfect, even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect; and when, again, he tells us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, he shows us the *highest good* that man can strive after. The perfection he tells us of is the perfection of active goodness. In the Gospel the precept reads: "Be ye merciful, as our Father is merciful." "We love," says the Apostle John, "because He first loved us." Who can think of God's goodness to the children of men, and of the love which is so lavishly given to each individual in his creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, as well as in the spiritual blessings which he receives at the hands of God, without having the temper of aspiration and feeling the pressure towards a perfection that ever rises higher the higher we ourselves ascend?

So of the other precept: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." The more the beauty of that kingdom delights us — whenever we think of its ideal, and reflect upon what this would be if that kingdom should [illegible] upon it, or whenever we thought-[illegible] how beautiful are the holiness, the [illegible] and the self-sacrifice which even now [illegible] in the lives of good men all about [illegible] strongest becomes the assurance that [illegible] worth living is the life in which a [illegible] and a divine spirit per-[illegible] common tasks and our daily pursuits.

We [illegible] consciously or unconsciously [illegible] our highest good. It [illegible] fame, ease or knowledge, [illegible] "getting on in the world." [illegible] things we *are seeking* [illegible] we desire the thing itself, [illegible] those who possess it; and [illegible] ourselves as we hope, [illegible]

[illegible] surprise many a man who thinks [illegible] God and Father whom Je-[illegible] be told that the *living* God [illegible] whatever he is re-[illegible] highest good. If he lives for money or ease or distinction, then money or ease or distinction is his god, awakening his trust, drawing him on, constraining his devotion. On the other hand, if a man loves most, and seeks first, truth and holiness and love; if the persons who show forth truth and holiness and love win his admiration; and especially if he accepts Christ as the highest image of that invisible Being in whom all moral perfections abide, — that man already aspires after the infinitely Holy One, and is even now rising nearer to Him whom he adores.

3. Aspiration may be defined as the longing of the soul after the goodness which appeals to our higher and real self. How beautifully Jesus illustrates it by the parable of the Pearl! A merchantman is seeking "*goodly pearls.*" He is not only a dealer in these precious objects, but a pearl-fancier, a lover of pearls, always on the look-out for a specimen that is rarer and handsomer than any that he has. After a while, as a reward of his seeking, he finds the Pearl of Great Price, in exchange for which he gladly goes and sells all that he has. So is it in the religious life. Let a man be an earnest seeker after the things that he knows to be right and pure and true, — the goodly pearls of character, — and he will not seek long before he finds the Pearl of Great Price. He will discover that righteousness, purity, and truth are laws of that divine kingdom which Jesus bids us seek first; and that he who has this kingdom, as the inward rule of his desires and the men which he is to strive to make real in the life of the world, is sure to receive all other things in proportion to his needs. He will learn, through his own experience, that the love which is first directed upon God "goes down upon other natures in proportion to their worth and claims;" that the man who makes it his first aim of his life to be a living and loving son in the divine family will become, because of that very love, a loyal and a loving brother to his fellow-man.

4. Aspiration may be further illustrated by the following short and simple parables of

Nature and of human life. He who aspires after God is like the plant that turns its opening flowers to the sun, and reaches forth with its tendrils for some sure support on which it may grow. Or, again, he who looks with longing to the kingdom of God is like a man that is journeying among the Swiss Alps. When the snow-clad and sky-piercing heights are hid in the mist, the low foot-hills at their base look high to him; but as soon as the sun and the wind scatter the fog, he no longer cares to gaze on those little hills in the valley, but lifts his eyes with eager longing to the great white summits towering toward heaven with their domes of snow that seem to lose themselves in the blue depths of the sky. Or, finally, we may liken the aspiring soul to the Alpine climber, who, in walking along some narrow ridge on the lofty glacier, looks not beneath him lest he should fall, but looking upward passes safely on. So on the road that leads heavenward, with dangerous temptations on either side of our narrow way, our only safety is in looking up and pressing forward.

5. Can any one doubt that it would be well with him if he would only make the kingdom of God his highest good? For in devotion to that which he esteems his highest good, a man will give up all else that he might have had. In her manual on the "Parables of the New Testament," Mrs. E. C. Wilson tells the story of a picture-book, the history of what was accomplished by the great naturalist Audubon, — what hard work he did, and what costly sacrifices he made, — and all for what? To make a picture-book of the birds of America. That was Audubon's pearl of great price for which he toiled so arduously and gave up so much. History abounds in similar biographies, which we are never tired of reading; the records of the lives of men whose motto it was —

"To scorn delights and live laborious days,"

and who, by single-hearted and whole-souled devotion to some one object which they had resolved to live for, won the honors that they sought. Whatever a man loves with all his heart and soul and mind and strength, of that object, whether it is material or spiritual, a human being or God, he will be always saying with the poet, —

"I only live to love thee."

6. What the young need specially to learn is that in making the kingdom of God their pearl of great price, they will lose no earthly treasure that is really worth possessing. The merchant, in the parable, had to sell all he had to buy the precious pearl. He may have owned very beautiful gems, of dazzling lustre and rarest workmanship; but everything had to be given up to make him the possessor of the one coveted treasure. Not in this way are we called upon to exchange earthly possessions for heavenly; for the kingdom of God is a *divine rule*, a heavenly disposition, a spiritual principle. We are not commanded to give up any of the things of earth which we may rightfully possess. Christ bids us give up only our self-will, our mean rivalries and jealousies, the worldly aims that absorb our souls, the worldly life of mere pleasure-seeking or money-getting. In place of these we are to have rightly regulated desires and appetites; follow pursuits in which we can keep and not lose our manhood; seek pleasures that truly recreate, and do not enervate, our minds; cherish human loves and friendships that will be as angels beckoning us to the love and the friendship that are divine.

All images and symbols of the soul's true life fall infinitely short of the great reality, — that he who has God has all things, since then, in all things that he has, he has God. In the homely but useful charcoal as well as in the flashing diamond, in the violet that blooms unseen among the meadow-grasses as well as in the vast forests that girdle the mountains, the sunshine is stored to serve and delight the children of men. So in the lowliest tasks as well as in the most brilliant deeds, in common joys as well as in the ecstasy of rare transfiguration hours, God's truth and love are manifest to those who aspire after Him, and who, by faithful continuance in well-doing, strive to rise to His perfections.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

What we truly and earnestly aspire to be, that in some sense we are. — MRS. JAMESON.

I have immortal longings in me. — SHAKSPEARE.

We can never give up longing while we are thoroughly alive. There are certain things we feel to be beautiful and good, and we must hunger after them. — GEORGE ELIOT.

If then ye are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. — COL. iii. 1.

O deathless soul like a sea-shell moaning for the bosom of the ocean to which you belong! — E. H. CHAPIN.

This aspiration of the soul mounting toward its source and its deliverer; this speechless language of faith and hope and love bounding upward towards the everlasting throne, — these are the spirit, the essence, of prayer. — CANON LIDDON.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Give some of the meanings of the phrase "the kingdom of heaven." Note on ver. 44.
2. What is always its central idea? Same note.
3. Why did people in the East *hide* their treasures? Same note.
4. What do you think of the honesty of the man who bought the field? Same note.
5. What is the plain lesson of the parable of the hid treasure? Same note.
6. Why did the merchant in the parable of the Pearl seek for *goodly* pearls? Note on ver. 45.
7. How are pearls formed? Same note.
8. How much were Cleopatra's pearls worth? Note on ver. 46.
9. What are some of the objects which men regard as the "highest good"? § 2.
10. Who are the men that really aspire after God? § 2, last sentence.
11. Define aspiration. § 3.
12. Illustrate it by the parable of the Pearl. § 3.
13. Tell the parable of the Plant. § 4.
14. Tell the parable of the Alpine Traveller. § 4.
15. Tell the parable of the Alpine Climber. § 4.
16. Tell the story of Audubon. § 5.
17. Why are we not required to give up all earthly objects in exchange for the "highest good"? § 6.
18. What *must* we give up?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Mention the different meanings of the phrase "the kingdom of heaven." Note on ver. 44.
2. What great central idea is *always* meant by the phrase? Same note.
3. Show how the reference to hidden treasure was pertinent in the case of those to whom Jesus spoke. Same note.
4. What is your opinion of the transaction of buying the field?
5. What is the *sole* lesson of the parable? Note on ver. 44.
6. What *two* motives led the merchant to seek goodly pearls? Note on ver. 45.
7. How are pearls formed? Same note.
8. What was the money value of Cleopatra's pearls? Note on ver. 46.
9. What kind of perfection is referred to in the Golden Text? § 1.
10. What does the precept "Seek first the kingdom of God" mean? § 1.
11. What are the objects which many men really worship? § 2.
12. Who is the truly aspiring man? § 2.
13. Define aspiration, and illustrate by the parable. § 3.
14. How will religious experience show us the "pearl of great price"? § 3.
15. Give the three short parables related in § 4.
16. Relate the story of Audubon. § 5.
17. In what respect is the seeker after righteousness *unlike* the pearl merchant? § 6.
18. What must we give up if we would acquire the "highest good"? § 6.
18. Illustrate God's manifestations of His truth and love. § 6, last clause.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Different theories of the "highest good."
2. How does the longing to be holy help make us so?

LESSON XXXVII.

REPENTANCE.

Luke xv. 3–7 and 8–10. Read also, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, verses 17–24 of Luke xv.

GOLDEN TEXT. — Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. — Matt. iv. 17.

THE MEANING.

SPECIAL NOTE. — The parable of the Prodigal Son is explained in the notes to Lesson I. There is also a special note on Luke xv. 17 in Lesson XXI. The parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin set forth, mainly, the *seeking* love of God; the parable of the Prodigal Son describes the rise and growth of repentance in the human heart. But in all three parables the need and the importance of the soul's turning from sin unto God are forcibly illustrated.

Verse 4. "*What man of you*," etc. Jesus wishes men to see that God is the Great Shepherd of souls, whose love ever seeks the sinful, and who rejoices whenever a single wandering child of His returns by the way of repentance to an obedient life. So he begins by asking whether any human shepherd would do otherwise than go in search of any one of his "silly sheep" that had gone astray, and when he had found it bring it back with great rejoicing to the shelter of the fold.

"*In the wilderness*," — that is, in a region where there was good pasture, but where grain was not cultivated.

Verse 5. "*On his shoulders*," — literally, "on *his own* shoulders;" thus emphasizing the shepherd's tender care.

Verse 6. "*Rejoice with me*." We all like to have others sympathize with us in the joy that we feel when we have found some precious object which had been lost. Especially would this be the case with an Eastern shepherd who had wandered far and long in his lonely search for his lost sheep.

Verse 7. "*More than over ninety and nine*," etc. We need not puzzle ourselves over the question, Who are these "ninety-nine righteous persons that need no repentance"? Equally unsatisfactory are the answers of those who say that they are the "unfallen angels;" of those who affirm that they are men like the Pharisees, who were "self-righteous;" and of those who think they are men who have lived lives that are only outwardly correct. Jesus simply meant that there is a sense in which more joy is felt over the honest repentance of a really bad man than over the righteous conduct of many men who have lived all their days in an exemplary manner. As applied to God, this is not saying that He feels *more* for the repentant sinner, but that he feels differently. "There is more joy, but not more love. Yet there is a different kind of love. God, who loves the good with the love of approbation and sympathy, loves the evil with the love of pity and compassion."

Verse 8. "*Having ten pieces of silver*," etc. The silver piece was the *drachma*, equal in value to about ten cents. The parable suggests the great poverty of the people of Palestine in the time of Jesus. The loss of one small coin would be the occasion of much anxiety, as the finding of it again would bring great happiness to the poor housekeeper.

THE TEACHING.

REPENTANCE is very closely allied to faith and to aspiration. "Repentance and faith," says Dr. Harse, "are the two sides of the same act of the soul in turning to God. Considered in relation to sin, it is repentance. Considered in relation to God and the good, it is faith. Like the magnet, the soul is repelled on the one side and attracted on the other at the same moment; repelled from evil and attracted by goodness. But it is one and the same polar force which acts in both directions, and we may describe it either by the name of repentance or by the name of faith." A good illustration of this is given us in the parable of the Prodigal Son. When the prodigal says, "I will arise and go to my father," he shows both faith and repentance. Faith prompts him to go to his father; repentance urges him to forsake his evil ways.

The repentance has also been said to be but another name for aspiration. "The prayers and hymns of saintly souls," says Martineau, "are but the plaintive music of baffled aspiration, as of some bird with broken wings. We cannot look up to God and reach after His holiness, and at the same time give our wills to iniquity. Whatever, therefore, comes between us and the object of our desires, we shall make haste to remove. We shall turn away from all evil courses, all sinful delights even, and our morning will be our repentance. The soul that truly aspires after the highest and holiest life it can live, and is ever seeking to change its longing cry, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," into the glorious reality of nearness to God, does not ask, concerning any particular unworthy or evil course into which it has strayed, 'Is this thing wicked? Will God visit me for having done it?' The question rather turns back to itself are rather: 'Does this thing keep other and better things away from me? Is it coming between God and my true self? Does it hinder me from being like a bird with wings, waiting to soar heavenward and yet clinging to the low places beneath

3. Repentance means being sorry for a wrong that one has done, or for the low and unworthy life one has lived, and turning straight round away from the wrong and towards the right. It is not merely being sorry for what we have done, nor is it merely turning away from it without feeling sorry; but it is both the feeling and the act, — the sorrow that prompts to the changed life, and the changed life that is born of the sorrow. We do not need to dwell long on the first part of this definition. Everybody knows that the only evidence a man can give of his being sorry for a sin is to forsake the sin at once and utterly. But we need to see that in all true repentance it is a *godly sorrow* which brings about the change in the heart and in the life. A mistake does not awaken sorrow. If our sins were nothing more than mistakes, like the stumblings of the child who is learning to walk, or like the blunders a schoolboy makes in doing his problems or in writing in his copy-book, we should never repent of them, never be sorry for having committed them, never be moved to say, with the prodigal, "I will arise and go to my father."

4. Saint Paul helps us to see what true repentance is when he says, "*Godly sorrow* worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret." We are all the sons of the Heavenly Father. When therefore we do wrong, we do that which is not only evil in itself, but is also an offence against God, who identifies His will with all that is good. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned," cried the penitent King of Israel. To us, who have known the brightness of a happier faith than David could have had, who have been taught to see in the Author of the Universe the Father of spirits, whose law is love and beyond whose tender care no wandering child of earth can ever wholly stray, — our every sin should be tenfold more hateful, and our repentance for it tenfold deeper, because of our belief in God's absolute goodness and infinite loving-kindness.

5. There is a celebrated painting by Rubens, entitled "Christ and the Four Penitents,"

in which this idea of "godly sorrow" is very touchingly illustrated. The four penitents are King David, the Apostle Peter, Mary Magdalene, and the Dying Thief. Wonderful are the contrasts in their forms and features, and varied, too, are the expressions of penitential grief upon their faces and in their attitudes; but all are alike touched by that godly sorrow which worketh a true repentance. And the four penitents — one of whom lived long centuries before Jesus walked in Galilee — are seen in the picture standing in the presence of one so holy, so loving, and so forgiving that ever since he lived and suffered men have looked up to him as the representative of the Divine holiness and love and forgiveness.

If you will read in the Bible the stories of these four penitents, you will understand exactly what is meant by sorrow before God, or godly sorrow. David, the bad side of whose character is as clearly portrayed as are his good qualities, was plunged into the deepest remorse and made the most thorough repentance for his odious sin, just because he had a profound sense of God's presence and aspired to live near to God. His penitence was not a passing feeling of shame at his own degradation, or a momentary sting of regret for the wrong he had done to others; but a true change of heart, a return to his allegiance to God, the struggle of his soul toward goodness, begun anew, with bitter tears of sorrow for the past and a determined purpose for the future.

6. We are now prepared to understand the teaching of the two parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin. Both parables conclude with the saying that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. "The denizens of heaven are the good; and what better occasion for joy can good beings have than the turning of a sinner from evil to righteousness?" Or in what better way could we be made to realize the infinite compassion of God than by these simple and touching stories which show us that the change implied in repentance, when the blurred image of God is in some degree restored, is an event of solemn interest, an occasion of sacred rejoicing to the Father in heaven?

7. On the side of God, then, there is the love that seeks, the love that pardons, and the love that rejoices in the wanderer's return. What remains for the wrong-doer but to yield to the love that is seeking him, to accept the offered forgiveness, to forsake the evil of his ways, and with hearty repentance and true faith to turn unto God? It would seem to be an easy thing for a child to confess his sins to his father, and to be truly penitent for them. But many men do not find it so easy to confess their sins to the Heavenly Father, and to offer to Him the sacrifice of a contrite spirit. The trouble is they are men "of little faith." They do not really believe in the divine forgiveness. Their hearts are not touched by the "good tidings" of God's compassion. They do not see in the character of Jesus an image of the merciful kindness that forever seeks what is lost. They fail to read in the death of Jesus the highest manifestation of God's forgiving love. If they would only open their minds and hearts to the grace and truth which Christianity reveals, the goodness of God would surely lead them to repentance, the Christ who has been lifted up would draw them to himself.

8. One thing we can all do: we can act up to the light we have, forsake utterly everything that we know is wrong. "This is what God commands, and what we can and ought to do." We can hate evil, and watch and pray against temptation. But if we really believe that we are *now* "sons of God," we shall do more than this. We shall live in the consciousness of a Father's love. If ever we err and stray from His ways like the wandering Prodigal, we shall, like the Prodigal in the parable, say to ourselves, "We will rise and go to our Father." We shall not ask to be released from the punishment we have justly incurred; but we shall find strength to bear the burden of penalty and to drink the healing cup, because our hearts will be filled with the sense that our repentance has brought us out of the shadow into the sun, and that to be once more in *our Father's presence*, even if for a time we must bear the sufferings which a broken law demands, is blessing enough; for it is reconciliation and peace, it is the joy and the hope of a divine sonship.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. — PSALM xi. 17.

Bring forth, therefore, fruit worthy of repentance. — MATT. iii. 8.

The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. — ROM. ii. 4.

I hold it truth with him who sings
To one clear harp with divers tones,
That men may rise *on stepping-stones*
Of their dead selves to higher things.

TENNYSON.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Why does Jesus begin the parable of the Lost Sheep by asking the question in ver. 4? Note.
2. What was the "wilderness"? Same note.
3. Why is the expression "on his own shoulders" added? Note on ver. 5.
4. When we have found something we had lost, how do we like to have others feel about it? Note on ver. 6.
5. Who are the "ninety and nine" referred to in ver. 7? Note.
6. How does God's love toward a repentant sinner differ from His love toward good men? Same note.
7. What was the value of one of the "pieces of silver" mentioned in ver. 8? Note.
8. What condition of the people is suggested by this parable of the Lost Coin? Same note.
9. What does Dr. Clarke say about repentance and faith? § 1.
10. Illustrate this from the parable of the Prodigal Son. § 1, last sentence.
11. If we aspire after God, how shall we feel about any sin? § 2.
12. What does repentance mean? § 3.
13. What is the difference between a mistake and a sin? § 3.
14. What does St. Paul say about true repentance? § 4, first sentence.
15. What did David say when he did wrong? § 4, bottom of p. 164.
16. Why should our repentance for sin be deeper than David's? § 4.
17. Describe the picture mentioned in § 5.
18. What is meant by there being "joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth"? § 6.
19. Why is it hard for us to confess our sins to God? § 7.
20. What can we do, and what ought we to do, in order to live near to God? § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. What different truths are taught by the three parables mentioned in the Special Note?
2. But what single lesson do all three enforce?
3. Why does Jesus begin the parable in ver. 4 by the question "What man of you," etc.? Note.
4. What was the "wilderness"? Note on ver. 4.
5. What do we crave from others when we find something we have lost? Note on ver. 6.
6. What are some of the explanations that have been given of the phrase, "ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance"? Note on ver. 7.
7. Whom did Jesus mean by the "ninety and nine"? Same note.
8. What was a drachma worth?
9. What does Dr. Clarke say about repentance and faith? § 1.
10. How does he illustrate it by the magnet? § 1.
11. How is repentance related to aspiration? § 2.
12. What questions does an aspiring soul [illegible] concerning any evil deed or course? § 2, [illegible] of p. 164.
13. Define repentance. § 3.
14. What *kind* of sorrow brings about a change of heart? § 3.
15. Why do we never repent of a mistake?
16. Give the quotation from St. Paul in the first sentence of § 4.
17. Why should *our* repentance for sin be deeper than the repentance of one who lived in the time of David? § 4.
18. Describe the painting, "Christ and the Four Penitents." § 5.
19. What can you tell of David's repentance? § 5.
20. What is the central teaching of the two parables in our lesson? § 6.
21. Why is it hard for us to confess our sins to God? § 7.
22. What can we do in the matter of repentance? § 8.
23. What will then be our feelings about suffering the penalty of our wrong-doing? § 8, last sentence.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Human repentance and the Divine forgiveness. 2. Repentance and regeneration.

LESSON XXXVIII.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Matt. vi. 5–8. Read over also the familiar passage from which the Golden Text is taken — John iv. 19–24.

GOLDEN TEXT. — God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. — JOHN iv. 24.

THE MEANING.

Verse 5. "*Hypocrites*," — that is, actors in religion; those who merely make-believe worship.

"*They love to stand and pray*," — that is, it gives them pleasure to attract attention to their pious observances. The Jewish custom in prayer was to stand with outstretched and uplifted hands.

"*In the synagogues*." These were the Jewish meeting-houses. In them the people met on their Sabbath and on other days, as we now meet in our churches for public worship. There was the same general order of services as that which we Christians now follow, — namely, the reading of the Scriptures, the singing of hymns or psalms, the saying of prayers, and the sermon. Let the pupil read in the Bible Dictionary or the Encyclopædia about the Jewish synagogue and its services.

"*In the corners of the streets*," — that is, in the broad public ways. The Jews offered prayer in the street at the hour of prayer, just as the Mohammedans do to-day, who display their devotion in the street or on the deck of a ship just as if they were in the mosque, "and recite the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah." "The fashion," says Dr. Schaff, "of *airing piety* in this or some other way has not died out."

"*Their reward*." Their ostentatious praying was done to attract men's attention; and as they *had* been "seen of men," they had got what they sought.

Verse 6. "*Thine inner chamber*." The "closet," or inner chamber, to which one may retire for secret prayer is not so much a place as a right condition of the heart. We can be alone with God in the midst of a crowd as well as in the loneliest solitude. We can worship Him in spirit and truth as well in the house of prayer when we join with a multitude as in our own chamber when we commune with Him alone.

On the other hand, a man can be just as ostentatious by calling attention to his private devotions, and letting others see him retire to pray, as if he imitated the Pharisaic hypocrites who prayed in public in order to parade their piety.

Verse 7. "*Use not vain repetitions*," — literally, "Babble not, do not stammer." The meaning is, Do not needlessly repeat yourself in your prayers, nor offer foolish and senseless petitions. The "heathen" use of vain repetitions is well illustrated in 1 Kings xviii. 26, where we read that the priests of Baal cried out for the space of half a day, "O Baal, hear us!" and in Acts xix. 34, where we read of the Ephesian mob shouting for two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

Verse 8. "*Your Father knoweth*." "Our prayers do not tell 'our Father' of our needs, but simply confess our consciousness of them, and our trust that He can and will supply them."

THE TEACHING.

1. TAKEN by itself, with no reference to the purpose for which it was spoken, and with no thought of the general attitude of Jesus respecting the worship of God, our lesson-passage might be regarded as an earnest warning against the dangers that attend public prayer, and an exhortation to the disciples to do all their praying "in secret." But let us look at it in its connection with the words that precede and follow it. The sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel opens with the general precept: "Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men *to be seen of them;*" or, in other words, You are not to perform any of your religious duties from such a low motive as that of seeking praise from men. Having announced this general principle, Jesus at once proceeds to give three distinct applications of it, — first, to almsgiving; second, to praying; and third, to fasting.

2. Now it is certain that the single lesson which Jesus meant to teach us concerning all three of these duties is the avoidance of religious display. See how it is with regard to almsgiving. "Jesus forbids not the *fact* of publicity, but the *purpose* of publicity." The poor widow, whose giving at the temple door Jesus so highly commended, gave her alms in public; but her purpose was not to attract attention, but "to cast in unto the gifts" that were offered to God. Or, again, observe what Jesus taught about fasting. It was not the *act* of fasting which he condemned, but the senseless methods and worldly motives which characterized the fasting of the Pharisees. Jesus suggests a rational method, and inculcates the right motive. So of praying. The contrast he draws is not between public worship and private prayer, but between the regulated, formal, and insincere prayer and that which is "the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast." He does not say to the disciples: Go not into the synagogues nor join the assemblies of those who stand, and with hands uplifted make, with one accord, their common supplications unto God. What he says is: Pray without hypocrisy; do not, when in the synagogue, imitate the formalism and worldliness of those who with self-complacent spirit make a parade of their devotions; but when thou prayest, *no matter where thou mayest be*, at home or in the synagogue, retire within the inner chamber of thy heart.

3. Public worship is as natural to man as private prayer. The most common methods of worship in all religions have been offerings, sacrifices, and prayers in which whole communities have joined. When Plutarch wishes to affirm that religion is universal, he says: "If we traverse the world, it is possible to find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without wealth, without coin, without schools and theatres; but *a city without a temple*, or *that practiseth not worship*, no one ever saw."

4. Jesus fully recognized the value of public worship. Even the elaborate ritual of the temple services met with no opposition in his teachings. By his scathing rebuke of the traders, who would turn the "Father's house" into a "den of thieves," he showed his reverence for the sacred place where the Jewish people met to worship God. But the most significant testimony to his appreciation of the value of public worship is given us in the account of his visit to the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke iv. 16). He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, says the Evangelist, "*as his custom was;*" and more than once in the Gospel narratives we meet with the statement that he taught the people "in the synagogues." It is true that in the service of the Jewish synagogue the preaching was of more consequence than the devotional exercises. We must not, however, forget that the synagogue was a house of prayer. The sermon was always preceded by a solemn ritual, which was largely an imitation of the more stately liturgy of the temple. These forms of prayer had been greatly abused, as such fixed prayers are always apt to be; and it was needful that Jesus should make frequent protest against the pious formalism which was then so prevalent. At the same time, by his own example, he sanctioned the custom of public worship. He, whose whole life was a

life of prayer, conformed to the regular Sabbath observances of the synagogue. He, who taught men that the essential condition of true prayer is a prayerful heart, that all times and places are holy to those who worship in spirit and in truth, who often went from the multitude apart to pray in secret, and spent long nights on the mountain-side communing with the Father of spirits, — did not disdain to join the lowly worshippers who met in the village synagogue to offer their united prayers to the God of Israel.

5. Public worship is, therefore, a Christian duty. Those who would follow Christ should follow him in this wholly human and natural observance. But the custom of public prayer would have grown up among those who received the teachings of Jesus, even if the Master himself had not left them an example in this respect. For Christianity declares that humanity is a brotherhood, — that no man lives or can live to himself alone, and that in the consciousness of our relation to God and our dependence upon his love and care we cannot help drawing near to one another in the common desire to pray to "*our* Father." Human life, as Jesus interpreted it and as the Christian Church has imperfectly illustrated it, means mutual helpfulness. It is bearing one another's burdens in a common hope, a common longing, a common aspiration. The spirit of Christ is with his disciples when they are *together*, striving to help one another, rejoicing in each other's joys, and sharing each the other's griefs. To this end we have received, as a precious inheritance from the Christian ages, the Sabbath, "made for man," and the opportunity it gives us for united praise and prayer.

6. To give good, then, no less than to get good, should we join in public worship. There may be times when, if we think only of ourselves, we can honestly say, "I would rather commune alone to-day; it will do me good to go forth into that great temple whose arch is the blue sky and its transept earth and air;" — or, "I shall be uplifted in spirit if I remain at home and hold communion with the poets and prophets to whose delightful companionship my books will introduce me." But can you call yourself a follower of Jesus if you feel no concern for those whom you may so greatly help by giving to them, in their hour of worship, the encouragement and inspiration of your personal presence? Your friends and neighbors, obedient to the old, deep instinct of worship, will go together to the house of prayer. They need you, even if you feel no need of them. "The thrill of reverence, of awe, of praise, of earnest conviction, of high resolve for duty," which passes through an assembly of worshippers, moves many a heart that fails to be uplifted by solitary prayer. The devotions of the Church help us to feel that we have a common human nature; that pardon, salvation, and peace are for all souls that truly seek them. Those who kneel together in the fellowship of a common humanity are drawn into a nobler and more sympathetic service of one another and of all mankind.

7. The testimony of the best men of all ages is in favor of public worship. Those whose custom it is to "go up to the house of the Lord," find their lives made richer, their souls ennobled, and their hearts attuned to kindlier sympathies. To neglect the sanctuary is to set one's self up in religious pride as being holier and stronger than one's fellows are; or it shows a selfish scorn for the spiritual necessities of others. The duty of young people in this matter is exceedingly plain. They should form the habit of attending public worship. They should look upon church-going as a blessed privilege, a means of grace, a way of drawing near to their Heavenly Father and their human brethren. They should use it faithfully as an aid to the religious life. To this end they should cultivate a reverent spirit, enter sympathetically into the prayers and praises of the church, go to the service of worship with the right preparation of thought and feeling, and go *from* the church, as Jesus came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, to take up the nearest duties of humanity with a spirit at once subdued and uplifted, — subdued to the tenderness of a divine compassion, uplifted to the strength of a divine helpfulness. Thus will they find in the church a blessing that will enrich their daily lives.

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

The world is not for him who does not worship. — HINDU SCRIPTURE.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord. — PSALM cxvii. 1.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. — HEB. x. 25.

Religion will glide by degrees out of the mind unless it be invigorated by stated calls to worship. — DR. JOHNSON.

For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee. — PSALM cxxii. 8.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Who are "hypocrites" in religion? Note on ver. 5.
2. *How* did the Jews pray? Same note.
3. What were the synagogues? Same note.
4. What people still pray in public places? Same note.
5. What reward had these hypocrites received? Same note.
6. What is the "inner chamber" to which Jesus bids us retire when we pray? Note on ver. 6.
7. What does the precept to "use no vain repetitions" mean? Note on ver. 7.
8. Give some examples of such "repetitions." Same note.
9. What is the lesson that Jesus teaches us about the manner of the performance of our duties? § 2, first sentence.
10. Apply this to the giving of alms. § 2.
11. Apply it to public prayer. § 2.
12. What does Plutarch say about cities practising worship? § 3.
13. How did Jesus once show his reverence for the temple as a place of worship? § 4.
14. What was his own custom on the Sabbath day? § 4.
15. What was the service in the synagogue? §§ 4 and 5.
16. If Jesus had not left us the example of church-going, why should we still as his disciples observe the custom of public prayer. § 6.
17. For what else, besides getting good, should we join in public worship? § 7.
18. What do we learn from the testimony of good men as to the value of public worship? § 8.
19. What is the duty of the young in this matter? § 8.
20. In what spirit should we go *to* church and go *from* church? § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Who were the hypocrites referred to in ver. 5? Note.
2. What was the Jewish custom in prayer? Same note.
3. Describe a Jewish Synagogue and its services. Same note.
4. What people still pray "in the corners of the streets"? Same note.
5. What is the reward of ostentatious praying? Same note.
6. What is the "closet" or "inner chamber" spoken of in ver. 6? Note.
7. Show that the *place* of prayer need have nothing to do with the sincerity of the praying. Same note.
8. What "vain repetitions" of heathen worship are mentioned in the Bible? Note on ver. 7.
9. If God knows our needs, what is it that we do when we bring those needs to Him in prayer? Note on ver. 8.
10. What general principle touching our religious duties did Jesus lay down in the Sermon on the Mount? § 1.
11. Apply this to almsgiving, showing that he did not forbid giving alms in public. § 2.
12. Apply it to praying, showing that this principle does not forbid public prayer. § 2.
13. Quote Plutarch to the effect that public worship is universal. § 3.
14. How did Jesus recognize the value of public worship in driving the traders from the temple? § 4.
15. What was his own custom with respect to attending public worship? § 4.
16. What was the worship of the synagogue? § 5.
17. What great principle of Christianity stimulates public or *common* prayer? § 6.
18. What should we go to church for? § 7.
19. What peculiar help comes from worshipping with others? § 7.
20. What is the duty of the young in this matter? § 8.
21. In what spirit should we go *to* church, and go *from* church? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. The value of social worship. 2. A liturgy as a help to public prayer.

LESSON XXXIX.

PRIVATE PRAYER.

Luke xi. 5–8.

GOLDEN TEXT.—And when thou prayest . . . pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which is in secret shall recompense thee.—Matt. vi. 6.

THE MEANING.

Verse 5. It is important to note the connection of this parable with the verses that go before it. We are told that one of the disciples, seeing Jesus pray, asked him for some form of prayer that he might use in his private devotions. In answer to this request Jesus taught him the words of the *Lord's Prayer*. After he has given this teaching he proceeds to assure the disciples of the *certainty that prayer will be answered.*

The purpose of the parable is to make men feel that they ought always to pray, in every time of need, and not lose heart, since, if perseverance in asking will overcome the reluctance of a selfish neighbor, much more will earnest prayer lay hold of the willingness of God. In spite of our doubts and in spite of all our discouragements, even if the blessing we crave is long withheld and the good thing we really need is not given us till after what seems a cruel delay, still we are to pray on without ceasing and without fainting. In the end we shall know that He in whom we have believed and to whom we have prayed, is indeed a Heavenly Father.

"*A friend*,"—that is, a neighbor who is willing under ordinary circumstances to act a friendly part. "*At midnight*." The traveller has been journeying in the night to avoid the burning heat. "The host is poor, and has nothing for him; yet, because even at that late hour he will not neglect the duties of hospitality, he gets up and goes to the house of another friend to borrow three loaves."

Verse 7. "*Trouble me not*,"—a cross and even rough answer. Yet there is a seeming excuse for it. The man—evidently a poor man like his neighbor—has not only gone to bed and locked his house for the night, but does not want to disturb his little children who are with him.

"*I cannot rise*." This "I can't" means "I won't." How forcible the man's words are: "Don't bother me. I 'm in bed. My door is barred; my little ones asleep. I 'm not going to get up just for you."

Verse 8. "*Because of his importunity*,"—a better translation would be, "because of his *shamelessness*." The man is so determined to get the bread that he feels no shame in knocking away, even at the risk of incurring his neighbor's anger.

The argument of the parable is very simple. This man who is "evil"—that is, who is guilty of very selfish feelings—is yet unable to resist the earnest asking, the persistent seeking, and the loud knocking of his needy neighbor. How much more effective, then, will be the prayer that is addressed to Him who never slumbers, who knows our every want, whose inmost nature is Love! We may need to pray often with great humility, and wait patiently for God's answer to our prayer. But if we ask in sincerity and with faith, and strive to live in the spirit of our prayers, the needed blessing will surely be received.

Let the pupil read verses 9–13, and consult the notes to Lesson III. p. 14.

THE TEACHING.

1. Prayer has been said to be "*the flight of the soul to the Only One.*" In public worship the soul of each rises with all the rest as a single soul into the flock. It is moved by a common impulse, and, drawing nigh to God in a devout fellowship of souls, makes with them the common supplications for general benefits. Yet even in public worship much of the prayer is personal to each worshipper. We ask that blessings may descend on all; but it is our own cup, empty or half filled, that we hold out for the refreshing waters, — it is our own individual thirst that we seek to quench. So also, when we join in the general confession and mourn that we have done what we ought not to have done, and have left undone the things we ought to have done, we are thinking each one of his own committed sins and neglected duties.

2. Secret or private prayer is the fountain of all other prayer. "Where there is no habit of private communion with God, there will be no earnestness in public prayer." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus gives to the disciples the Model Prayer in immediate connection with his charge to them to pray in secret, in the inner chamber and with the closed door. In the Gospel of Luke we are told that once, as Jesus was praying in a certain place, when he ceased a disciple said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray." Then Jesus, answering, said, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," etc.

Thus the Lord's Prayer, so beautifully fitted to be the prayer of every assembly of worshippers, was originally designed as a model for private devotion — as if Jesus wished to throw the emphasis of his teaching on the supreme value to every soul of a direct and personal communion with the Father of spirits.

3. This supreme value of private prayer arises from the supreme importance to every human being of keeping his *inner life* — mind, as though and feeling and purpose — pure and holy. "Secret prayer," says Dr. Barrett, "is the sign and the food of this inner life. It is sign — for this life is love and where love exists it will express itself. If the heart loves God, it will commune with Him, it will habitually turn to Him as the heliotrope turns to the king of day; it will lean on Him in dependence, trust, and confidence. Its food, — for such communion opens the soul to receive new life flowing into it from God, and prayer is the door through which the bread and wine of the soul are brought in."

4. To keep this inner life sweet and true, to cultivate in the heart Christian sentiments and graces, we must have the *habit* of private prayer. We cannot make ourselves pure and holy by merely looking upon purity and holiness as desirable possessions, or even by resolving that we will acquire them. We must keep the door of the soul open, that through our spiritual faculties the "things of the Spirit" may come and take possession of us. We must ask in order to receive. To do this we must observe the *conditions* of true prayer; we must also pray from the right *motives* and use the necessary *helps*.

5. Among the conditions of true prayer *faith* is of first importance. "All things," said Jesus, "whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer *believing*, ye shall receive." This does not mean that if a man says, I believe this or that, although it is wholly irrational and there is no evidence *of any kind* for it, such a man will receive the thing he asks for. It means that prayer will be of no avail to any one who does not pray with the expectation and in the confidence that his prayer will be answered. An intelligent man, who is accustomed to listen to what reason says, will not pray in the same spirit as an ignorant or superstitious man, or for the same objects. If he is a Christian his prayer of faith will be a prayer in the spirit of him who ever prayed, "Thy will, O God, not mine, be done." He will also seek to learn what he can know of the *methods* of the divine working. Having this knowledge, he will see with the conviction that God has so arranged the order of the world, that to ask Him to change the order would be equivalent to asking Him to cease to be God. On the other hand, he will

see that the prayer of faith rests on the strong foundation of spiritual fact. "Men's earliest voices, by some significant instinct, went out in prayer." Unless all human testimony is false, men have received answers to their prayers as certainly as they have reaped harvests or gained knowledge. And, finally, the prayer of faith is confirmed by every man's individual experiences; for who of us has not at some time truly prayed, and found in such a moment that comfort, strength, and inspiration were given unto him?

6. The second condition of true and acceptable prayer is "a will struggling to do in all things the law of God." It is true that we expect to receive strength of will as a *result* of our praying. But we must also pray from the purpose to do right. In other words, we must be living for that for which we pray. If we are not, then no matter how correct our views of prayer may be, or even how much we may *approve* of right conduct, our words will mount up, but our thoughts will remain below. This is not to say that God helps those who help themselves. If this often quoted proverb were all that could be said of prayer, few men would ever pray, still fewer pray aright. What is meant by praying for that which we are living for is this: that when we are striving to keep ourselves from evil, when the daily hunger of our minds and the trust of our hearts are for righteousness, when we are deeply submissive to the will of God, then we can pray with the conviction that we shall receive accessions of moral and spiritual power. Our real religious experiences not only move us to pray, but, as has well been said, "they are never so rich as when they most completely merge themselves in the purifying spirit of prayer."

7. The motives to prayer may be very briefly enumerated. The true worshipper will pray out of a deep sense of the needs which only God can supply, — the need of strength, of comfort, of forgiveness. He will also pray out of a grateful heart, — a heart deeply sensible of the divine mercies. He will pray out of his love of others, praying for them and seeking strength to help them in the struggles of their lives. And he will pray out of his devotion to Truth and Right, asking the God of Truth and Right to keep him loyal, and to help him to be always and everywhere a good "soldier of the Lord."

8. The helps to prayer are many and within the reach of all. We can all form habits of meditation and self-examination. We can stop, if we will, in the midst of our daily labors and enjoyments, and think how near God is to us and how great is the sum of His mercies. We can look up through Nature to Nature's God. We can feed our souls on the great truths of religion, as these are taught us in the Scriptures and in the writings of Christlike men. And we can also at times look in and not out. Looking *out* to what is required of us — to the nearest duties and the most needy fellow-man — should be our habitual attitude. But at times we should commune with our own hearts, — look in upon the feelings we are cherishing, the desires that animate us, the aims we are pursuing. Made conscious of our spiritual wants, we shall "cast their burden" upon God in earnest prayer.

Another great help to prayer is to have stated times for our private communion with God. Not that we should be tied down to set occasions, and never pray except as the appointed hour comes round. But as prayer should be the breath of our daily lives, so we should begin and end each day with prayer. Our morning prayer may well be one of gratitude and trust, the supplication for strength and guidance through the day; while the prayer at night may fitly be an offering of penitence, a sigh of aspiration, and a calm reliance on the Lord who thus far has so kindly led us on. If every child and young person would begin and end each day with a sincere trusting prayer to God, he would find such prayer an ever-increasing source of strength and joy. The thought and feeling that ascend as prayer would descend in blessing, "as the vapor that is drawn up by the kiss of the sun falls in freshening rain."

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

When prayer is carried on the wings of faith and strong desires, it stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne where mercy sits. — JEREMY TAYLOR.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer to Thee and will look up. — PSALM v. 3.

Let my prayer be set before thee as incense; and the lifting up of mine hands as the evening sacrifice. — PSALM cxli. 2.

Much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him. — MATT. vii. 11.

Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. — HEB. iv. 16.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What do we learn in the verses just preceding this lesson-passage? Note on ver. 5, first clause.
2. What is the purpose of the parable of the Selfish Neighbor? Same note, second clause.
3. Relate the circumstances of the man's going at midnight to his neighbor's house. Same note.
4. What kind of a reply did this neighbor make to the man's request? Note on ver. 7.
5. What do you think of the neighbor's conduct?
6. What is the meaning of the word *importunity*, in ver. 8? Note.
7. What is the *argument* of the parable? Same note, last clause.
8. What has prayer been called? § 1, first sentence.
9. For what purpose was the Lord's Prayer given? § 2, last sentence.
10. What is the "*inner life*"? § 3.
11. What is the first condition of true prayer? § 5.
12. What kind of faith does prayer depend upon? § 5.
13. What is the second condition of true prayer? § 6.
14. What must we *be* if we would pray aright? § 6.
15. What are some of the *motives* to prayer? § 7.
16. What is meant by meditation? § 8.
17. What is meant by self-examination? § 8.
18. What are the proper *times* for private prayer? § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. In what *connection* is the parable of the Selfish Neighbor given? Note on ver. 5.
2. What two things does the parable teach us that we should feel about prayer? Same note.
3. Explain the details of the parable, — the "friend," the "midnight" hour, the social condition of the two men, etc. Same note.
4. Show how rude and unfeeling the neighbor's words *appear*. Note on ver. 7.
5. Was there any excuse for them?
6. What was the *importunity* in this case? Note on ver. 8.
7. Give the *argument* of the parable. Same note.
8. What is the similar argument in verses 9–13?
9. What is this kind of reasoning called?
10. What has prayer been said to be? § 1.
11. In what sense is this true when we join in public worship? § 1.
12. Under what circumstances and for what purpose did Jesus teach the Lord's Prayer to his disciples? § 2.
13. What does Dr. Clarke say of the relation between "secret prayer" and the "inner life"? § 3.
14. What things will not, and what things will, help us to be pure and holy? § 4.
15. What does the passage mean which is quoted in § 5, second sentence?
16. What kind of facts show us that prayer is rational? § 5, last part.
17. Show what is meant by praying for what we are living for. § 6.
18. Give the motives to prayer mentioned in § 7.
19. Show how meditation is an aid to prayer. § 8.
20. Show the relation between prayer and self-examination. § 8.
21. What help comes to us from having fixed times for private prayer? § 8.
22. What are the best times in the day for private prayer?

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. Prayer for *temporal* blessings. 2. Prayer in behalf of others. 3. Can we remove *all* the speculative objections against prayer?

LESSON XL.

SELF-CONSECRATION.

Luke xvii. 7–10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Seek ye first the kingdom of God.—Matt. vi. 33.

THE MEANING.

SPECIAL NOTE.—The pupil will do well to turn back to the notes on this lesson-passage in the lesson on Humility (Lesson XXVI. p. 113). The parable is made use of there to show that humility is the natural attitude of one who realizes the full claims of Duty. In this lesson the parable is referred to that we may see how great is our debt to God, and how entire and absolute should be our consecration to His service.

Verse 7. "*Which of you*," etc. This form of question implies that no man would think of asking his servant to sit down to meat until that servant had finished all his tasks.

"*By and by;*" better, *straightway*, as in the Revised Version. It should also be connected with the following verb, so that it will read, "*Come straightway* and sit down to meat."

Verse 8. "*Gird thyself.*" This refers to the dress worn in ancient times, which was fastened about the loins when the wearer wished to move about with freedom. To wait at table with the dress girded up was a mark of slavery.

Verse 9. "*Doth he thank that servant?*"—that is, does he feel that he is under a special obligation to his slave for this additional service at table? Of course no slave-master would have any such feeling.

Verse 10. "*Unprofitable servants;*" yet in the parable of the Talents the servant who has been faithful in his master's service is both praised and rewarded. Here, however, the emphasis is on the word *servants*, or *slaves*. These men are unprofitable because they are slaves. A slave was always regarded as having no rights, and so as having no claim to thanks, no matter how well he might have served his master.

The parable gives us a true picture of ancient slavery. Jesus tells it, not to justify nor to condemn servitude, but simply to illustrate a spiritual truth. He does not transfer to God the character of a cruel task-master, or represent God's children as being bond-servants. The sole point at which the story touches the life of a follower of Jesus is this: a true Christian will be so grateful for God's mercies, and will have such a high ideal of the duties that are required of a son of God that nothing short of an entire self-consecration will satisfy his own sense of what he owes to God. In a kingdom of grace, where the king is "our Father," we can be very profitable, even "good and faithful," servants, and yet all the while we may be so truly humble that we can honestly think ourselves unprofitable.

THE TEACHING.

1. THE parable of Extra Service teaches two lessons, Humility and Consecration. First, we are to be humble for the very plain and obvious reason that a man who does what it is only his simple *duty* to do, does nothing to boast of. And secondly, we are to realize so fully the greatness of Duty, and be so deeply impressed by what is justly expected of us as the children of a Divine Family, that we shall heartily and with gladness devote ourselves to our Father's service.

2. To consecrate ourselves to God does not imply that we are to renounce the affections that bind us to our human kind. This is the teaching of false religion, the strange idea of those who regard the religious life as some-

thing that is apart from our common human life, instead of a spirit that pervades and regulates all human relations. God is not a slave-master, demanding that we shall do nothing that is not done directly for Him; nor is He a despot who is jealous of all service which He cannot appropriate to Himself and turn to His own glory. As our Father, He rejoices in our brotherly kindness as well as in our filial obedience. We show our loyalty and our love to Him when we are good brothers as well as when we are good sons. We cannot, therefore, truly consecrate ourselves to His service without devoting our best energies to the doing of our nearest duties to our fellow-men and to ourselves.

3. Self-consecration implies that we will be true to ourselves; for the duty of striving after perfection is not merely a debt that we owe to God. "We have our own nature to honor, serve, and glorify." Any view of self-consecration which requires a man to inflict pain and torture upon himself, or to give up pursuits and pleasures which he may rightfully follow and enjoy, in order that he may please God, is a low and unworthy conception of religious duty. We cannot please our Maker by spoiling His work. If we are to offer ourselves as the acceptable sacrifice, then "to make our offering fit for God's altar, we must make it *perfect after its kind*, strong, fair, and spotless." We are to hallow our bodies and spirits, which are God's, by using, not by marring, them. Sacrifice is, indeed, the law of Christian living; but the sacrifice that is required is the giving up of whatever stands in the way of our being our true and best selves.

4. Self-consecration as a religious duty not only requires us to give to God all the love, all the obedience, and all the service we are capable of; it also demands that we shall continually raise the standard of our aims and enlarge the measure of our duty. Here comes in the rich suggestiveness of the parable. The more we realize the claims of those relations in which we stand to God, and the better we comprehend how much is implied in the fact that we are sons and brothers in a Divine Family, the readier shall we be to increase the amount of our service; while at the same time we shall feel all the more keenly how poor are our best performances, how far below the life we might live is the life we have been living.

5. Let me use a fresh illustration to enforce this truth. Let us suppose the case of a general who has been placed in command over a nation's armies. His king has put the sword into his hand, and the soldiers are ready to follow him with loyalty and enthusiasm. A great battle is impending. The commanding general knows that his soldiers, his king, and his country expect him to do his whole duty. He feels that his high rank lays upon him a heavy obligation. He gives himself, therefore, body, mind, and soul, to the work that is before him. Hither and thither speed his messengers,—these to take his orders, those to watch the movements of the foe. Every precaution is taken against surprise; every preparation made for a successful fight. Night comes at last,—the night before the battle. The general has well earned a night's repose, for the duties of the day have all been faithfully attended to. But the sense of his high calling and of the imperial tasks that have been intrusted to him will not permit him to seek his couch. Disguising himself as a common soldier, he moves among his troops, passes from sentinel to sentinel, inspects every detail of preparation, and here and there, where he has reason to suspect a flagging courage, infuses something of his own splendid faith into the hearts of his followers. At length, wellnigh exhausted with his weary labors, he returns to his tent, and commends himself, his army, and his country's cause to the God of battles, feeling in true humility of soul that all which he has done comes short of what he would have done.

6. Why do we praise such a man? Is it not because he gave himself to his work with that entire self-consecration which saw beyond the region of Achievement the ever-beckoning stars of Possibility?

A great thinker says: "'Tis not what man *does* which exalts him, but what man *would* do." We can always aim high, even if, because of weakness, we do not always reach our aim. The goodness that is possible to us

and that is due from us all, "consists simply being true in action and in feeling to the claims of the relations in which we stand." this lofty purpose we should continually secrate ourselves. If we do this, then we ll be aided on the heavenward way by every ere prayer we offer, by every throb of de- it gratitude to God, by every genuine act of entance, by every hour of holy meditation, each upward look to the great souls who above us, and by each helpful deed that do for any child of God.

. Each consecration *resolved upon* opens er the gate of nearness to God. Each time we say with sincerity, "This day's duties ll be discharged aright, not with eye-service with entire fidelity," we gain new strength ffer the acceptable sacrifice. But our surest ance in the Christlike life comes from car- ig out this high purpose. The builders of great cathedrals of Europe were accus- ed to prepare for their daily labors by yer. Then when they began their work, ir lofty aim would not suffer them to slight n the smallest part or most obscure corner he structure. The world might not see the ects of poor workmanship; but these work- ı loved their work *for their own thought of* nd so would leave no portion of the build- less perfect than their highest skill and it patient toil could make it.

Ve are all builders of a cathedral nobler ı any temple made with men's hands. We building the Temple of the Holy Spirit, Cathedral of CHARACTER. Loving this k, not as men-pleasers, not even as seekers r a heavenly reward, — but loving it for our thought of it, as the work our loving Fa- has given us to do, shall we not wholly con- n both heart and will to its full demands?

8. The teachings of Jesus reach their highest point in those immortal words with which he accepted the bitter cup of death, "Not my will, but thine, O God, be done." The truth of the Cross is the truth with which these Lessons began, — that God's love is the love of a Father. From that truth it follows that all our human duties are the duties of sons and brothers, — that sonship means entering into God's great purposes, making it our meat and drink to do His will; and that brotherhood is giving ourselves in sympathy and in sacrifice to the uplifting of humanity, even as the Christ gave his life that he might draw all men to a diviner manhood.

There can be no divorce of the teachings of Jesus from his life. What he taught, *that he was.* There is no duty that he set forth in gracious words which does not borrow new lustre from the grace and truth that shine from his example. The supreme duty of self-consecration is but the translation into a precept of the whole life of him who in early boyhood was eager to be about his Father's business, and the crown of whose manhood was that crown of thorns, which testified to a will completely conformed to the will of God and sanctified by a self-sacrifice that was as pure and disinterested as the love of God.

To the blessed guidance and heavenly inspiration of this "Teacher sent from God" I would commend all those who have studied these Lessons. Learn of *him*, not of those who would have you learn their views of him. Be his loyal, chivalrous followers, fighting the good fight of *faith*, holding *hope's* bright banner aloft, and loving God and man with something of your Leader's unselfish, hallowed, and ever-hallowing *love.*

GOLDEN SAYINGS.

ve *all thou hast;* high Heaven rejects the lore nicely calculated less or more."

Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice.

WORDSWORTH.

To this end have I been born and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. — JOHN xviii. 37.

The uplifted cross, towards which all men are drawn with an infinite passion of desire,

has not lowered, but heightened, the rigor of the strain, the austerity of the struggle. — REV. H. S. HOLLAND.

In taking vows of Christian living, you take sides with duty; you pledge yourselves to it; you declare that you love it and will forever seek to do it. — REV. T. T. MUNGER.

For their sakes I consecrate myself, that they themselves also may be consecrated in truth. — JOHN xvii. 19.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. Relate the parable of Extra Service. Luke xvii. 7–10.
2. What kind of a master does it speak of?
3. Why was his "servant" bound to do all the master required of him?
4. What does the question with which the parable begins *imply?* Note on ver. 7.
5. What was it to "gird" one's self? Note on ver. 8.
6. Of what was it a sign to wait at table with girded dress? Same note.
7. What is meant by the question, "Doth he thank that servant"? Note on ver. 9.
8. Why were such servants "unprofitable"? Note on ver. 10.
9. How were slaves looked upon in old times? Same note.
10. Are we the slaves or the sons of God?
11. How then can the parable apply to us?
12. How does the parable teach humility? § 1.
13. If we consecrate ourselves to God, how will that affect us in our relations with our fellow-men? § 2.
14. What is said about sacrifice as "the law of Christian living"? § 3, last sentence.
15. What does the General do in the case supposed in § 5?
16. How does this illustrate the truth taught in the parable?
17. What do you think of the words quoted from a great thinker in § 6, second clause?
18. What is said in § 7 about the builders of the great cathedrals?
19. How can you apply this to the work of building character?
20. In what words of Jesus do we find his *highest* teaching? § 8, first sentence.
21. What does our sonship to God mean? § 8.
22. What is brotherhood? § 8.
23. What gives added force and beauty to the teachings of Jesus? § 8.

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Tell the parable of Extra Service, or the Unprofitable Servants. Luke xvii. 7–10.
2. What makes this parable *seem* to be a "*hard saying*"?
3. What kind of a servant is here spoken of?
4. What does the very form of the question in ver. 7 imply? Note.
5. Explain the phrase "*gird thyself*." Note on ver. 8.
6. What is the full force of the question, "Doth he thank that servant?" Note on ver. 9.
7. How are the servants who do well spoken of in the parable of the Talents?
8. How, then, can the same kind of servants be here called "unprofitable"? Note on ver. 10.
9. Show in what respects the parable does not truly picture our relations to God.
10. What is the sole point at which it touches our duty? Same note.
11. How does it teach humility? § 1.
12. How does it teach self-consecration? § 1.
13. What is the idea of false religion concerning self-consecration? § 2.
14. Show what the true idea is. § 2.
15. How does self-consecration to God imply faithfulness to one's self? § 3.
16. How is sacrifice the "law of Christian living"? § 3.
17. What does self-consecration require of us besides giving ourselves wholly to God? § 4.
18. How does the parable enforce this additional demand? § 4.
19. Give the illustration supposed in § 5.
20. Why do we praise such a man? § 6.
21. In what does the goodness of which we are all capable consist? § 6, third sentence.
22. How does this agree with the quotation in the second sentence of § 6?
23. What will aid us in living a consecrated life? § 6, last part.
24. Give the illustration of the Builders and apply it. § 7.
25. What is the "truth of the cross"? § 8.
26. What other truths follow therefrom? § 8.
27. How is the duty of self-consecration taught by the life of Jesus? § 8.

POINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. True and false sacrifices. 2. *Special* consecration to a Christian life, and daily consecration to daily duties.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LESSONS XXXI.-XL.

FOR YOUNGER PUPILS.

1. What is the "first and great commandment"?
2. How did Jesus persuade men to love God?
3. What is it to love God, and how can we make this love grow?
4. Tell the story of the epileptic boy whom Jesus cured.
5. What is *faith?*
6. How is faith like a savings-bank?
7. Tell the parable of the Lily.
8. What lessons does it teach us?
9. How may the folly of being anxious be shown?
10. Tell the parable of the Vine-dressers.
11. What is reverence?
12. What does the motto "Look up, and not down" mean?
13. Give the two instances that show how glad Jesus was when those whom he had helped were grateful to him.
14. Why should we always thank those who give us good things?
15. What will be the effect upon our character of cultivating the habit of giving thanks to God for His mercies?
16. Tell the parable of the Pearl.
17. What is aspiration?
18. What is the "highest good" we can seek?
19. Tell the parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin.
20. What is true repentance?
21. Why should Christians be more penitent than other men?
22. What was the custom of Jesus "on the Sabbath-day"?
23. Why should we join in public worship?
24. In what spirit should we go *to* church and go *from* church?
25. Tell the parable of the Selfish Neighbor.
26. Why should we pray?
27. What are some of the helps to prayer?
28. Tell the parable of Extra Service.
29. What two lessons does it teach?
30. What is said of the builders of the old cathedrals, and of our work in character-building?

FOR OLDER PUPILS.

1. Explain the meaning of the words *heart, soul, mind,* and *strength,* in the "great commandment."
2. How did Jesus follow the "method of Nature" in persuading men to love God?
3. How is love to God cultivated?
4. What event occurred just after Jesus came from the Mount of Transfiguration?
5. Define and illustrate *faith.*
6. What are meant by the "*insights* of faith," and what by the "*trusts* of faith"?
7. Tell the parable of the Birds and the parable of the Lily.
8. What did Jesus teach men about the life of the flowers?
9. How does that life teach us to trust and not be anxious?
10. What two important lessons are taught by the parable of the Vine-dressers?
11. What is reverence, and how may it be educated?
12. How will our reverence for God affect our feelings towards our fellow-men?
13. How may we account for the unthankfulness of those whom Jesus healed and helped?
14. How has Jesus taught us to be thankful to God?
15. What makes thankfulness so beautiful and inspiring a virtue?
16. What is the lesson of the parable of the Pearl?
17. What does the precept "Seek first the kingdom of God" mean?
18. What must a man give up if he would obey this precept?
19. What great lesson is taught by the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son?
20. How is repentance related to faith and to aspiration?
21. What *kind* of sorrow for sin brings about a change of heart and life?

APPENDIX.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE.

For all the Lessons in this course, Smith's Bible Dictionary and a good Commentary on the Gospels will furnish important helps to the teacher or advanced pupil. In exegesis, Meyer (in the English translation) and Alford stand at the head of the commentators. The "Handy Commentary," edited by Bishop Ellicott, is an excellent work, published at a low price. Dr. James Morison's "Practical Commentary" (only two volumes, those on Matthew and Mark, have been issued) is catholic and suggestive. The *Liberal* commentaries on the Gospels are those by Dr. J. H. Morison (on Matthew only), and by Norton, Livermore, and Paige. For the "Sermon on the Mount," Tholuck's Commentary is invaluable. The parables are fully treated in the well-known volume by Archbishop Trench, but better still in the newer work of Dr. Bruce, "The Parabolic Teaching of Christ." "New Testament Parables, Illustrated by Pictures and Stories," by Mrs. E. C. Wilson, will be profitable for the younger classes. "The Training of the Twelve," by Dr. Bruce, contains many valuable chapters of exposition. The Lives of Jesus by Keim, Farrar, Edersheim, Geikie, and others, abound in explanations of the sayings of Jesus. "Hours with the Evangelists," by Dr. Nichols, is a most stimulating book, treating the teachings of Jesus philosophically and comprehensively. A similar treatment of these teachings will be found in "Ecce Homo," and in the "Lectures on the Influence of Jesus," by Phillips Brooks. The admirable writings of Dr. Furness need no mention here. The books of Dr. James Freeman Clarke, too, are well known for their catholic spirit and suggestive treatment. His "Legend of Thomas Didymus" is directly helpful in the study of these Lessons. Volume III. of the "Bible for Learners" may profitably be consulted on many of the Lessons. J. Estlin Carpenter's "Life in Palestine when Jesus lived" is a cheap and very useful handbook to the Gospels; and some of the notes in W. C. Gannett's "Childhood of Jesus" will be found helpful in studying the sayings of the

Master. Special reference may here be made to certain volumes of sermons that may advantageously be read in connection with the first ten Lessons of this series. These works are Dr. J. H. Thom's "Laws of Life after the Mind of Christ," Henry Giles's "Christian Thought on Life," Dr. R. W. Dale's "Laws of Christ for Common Life," George MacDonald's "Unspoken Sermons," and for Lesson VII., Sermon XVIII. in Bushnell's "Christ and his Salvation," and Sermon IV. in Dr. Martineau's Second Series of "Hours of Thought on Sacred Things."

The list given above comprises many books that would be of service to teachers who use these Lessons. *Every Sunday-school should have a well-filled reference-library,* and the Sunday-School Society is always ready to give counsel and aid in the selection and purchase of suitable books for this purpose.

For teachers who may wish to own one or more reference-books to use with these Lessons, the following lists are suggested: —

ONE BOOK.

Either the NEW TESTAMENT FOR ENGLISH READERS. By Dean Alford. Vol. I. Part I., The Synoptic Gospels. "The New Testament Commentary, by Dean Alford," says Rev. Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, "is the very best work of its kind that we have in English." The Sunday-School Society has arranged to supply to teachers the single volume of this work which contains the Commentary on Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Price (net), $3.00.

Or the HANDY COMMENTARY. 3 vols. (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). This is sold by the Sunday-School Society at $3.00 for the set, and is also highly recommended as a reference-book for teachers. Though less complete in the way of exegesis, it is more liberal in its theological tone than Alford's Commentary.

TWO BOOKS.

Alford (as above) and the best one-volume edition of SMITH'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE. Price, $3.00. An excellent abridgment of this work is sold for $1.50.

THREE BOOKS.

Alford, Smith, and Farrar's LIFE OF CHRIST. A good edition of this valuable book (without the notes) is sold for $1.00.

FOUR BOOKS.

Alford, Smith, Farrar, and Dr. J. H. Thom's LAWS OF LIFE AFTER THE MIND OF CHRIST. Price, $2.00.